

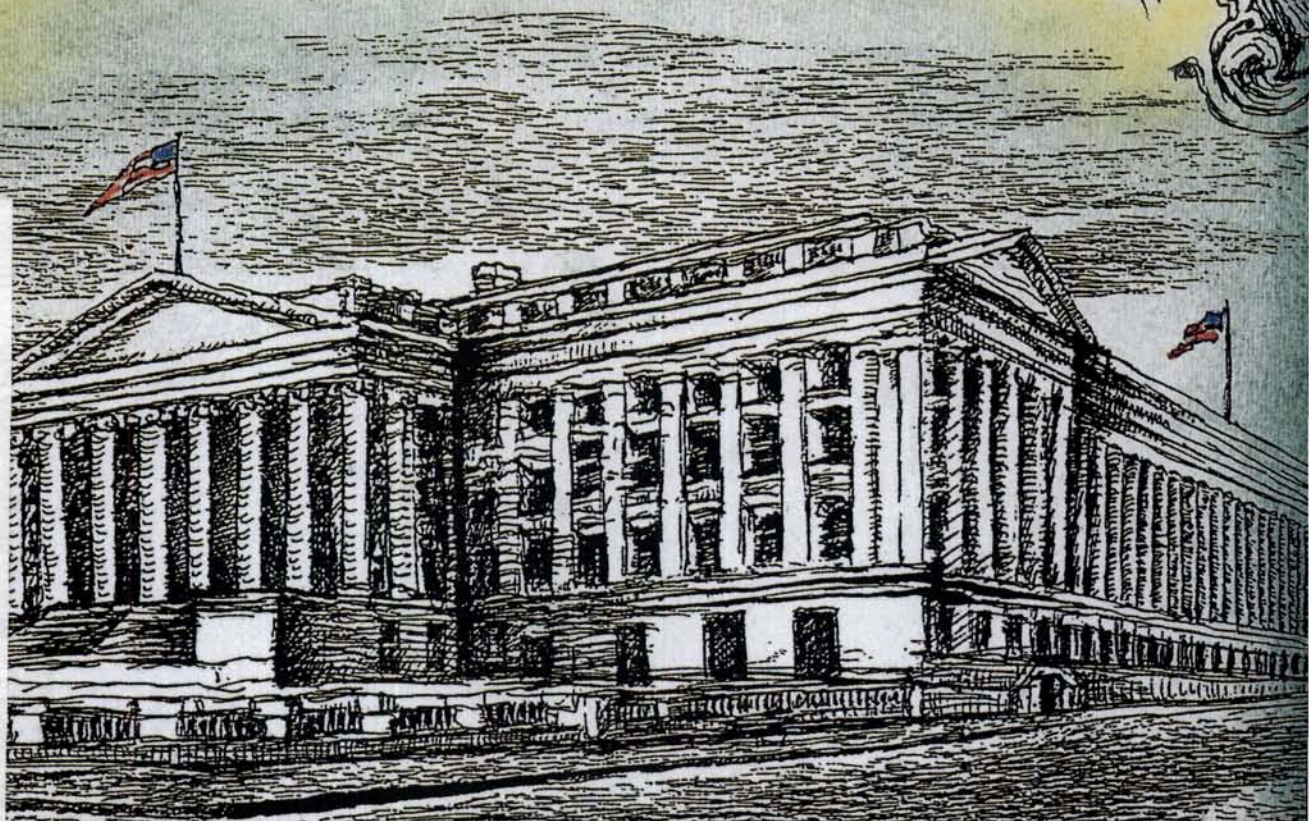
Chronicles

March 1996

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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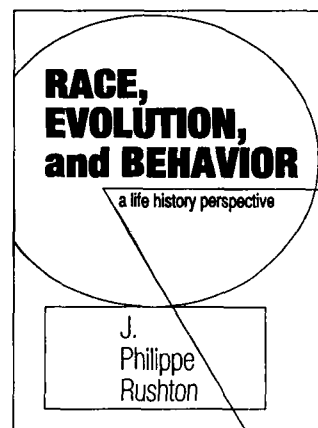
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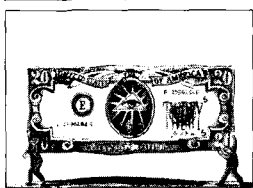
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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On the Fourth Amendment

In his December essay, "The Mark of the Beast," Larry Pratt implies that those who oppose unconstitutional searches and seizures by the government should be in favor of the exclusionary rule. But such a rule, whereby probative (i.e., valid) evidence may not be introduced in court if it was obtained in violation of the Fourth Amendment, is not required by the Constitution, nor was it favored by the Founders, as Pratt intimates. In fact, not until 1914, in the Supreme Court case *Weeks v. United States*, was an exclusionary sanction applied to evidence obtained in violation of the Fourth Amendment, and this case involved federal criminal litigation. It was not until 1952 that the Supreme Court imposed a federal constitutional exclusionary requirement on the states. The exclusionary rule is simply not required by the Constitution, nor is it implied by rules prohibiting certain types of searches and seizures.

Whether the Constitution *ought* to provide for the exclusion of illegally obtained evidence is another matter. In my view it should not, because it does not violate the rights of truly guilty criminals to convict them with any probative evidence, no matter how obtained, and because there are better ways to sanction errant police than to let criminals go free. For example, any individual subject to an illegal search or seizure who is not proved guilty should have a cause of action for damages against the police and the state, and the policemen involved ought to be subject to criminal action, if warranted. Further, no advocate of federalism should support federal imposition of an exclusionary rule on states, no matter how one views the merits of the exclusionary rule.

—N. Stephan Kinsella
Philadelphia, PA

Larry Pratt Replies:

While the exclusionary rule was not articulated until 1914, the principle dated from colonial times. It seems that the Supreme Court established the exclu-

sionary rule as a way of correcting the slippage of the later part of the 19th century.

One of the Intolerable Acts involved general warrants, better known at the time as Writs of Assistance. These writs empowered the Crown's troops to enter homes without specifying a time or a person. They were often used by customs officers who were afraid that contraband might disappear before troops could make a surprise entry. Sound similar to today's War on Drugs?

In 1780, a Declaration of Rights was attached to the Constitution of Massachusetts. It reiterates the Fourth Amendment and adds: "All warrants therefore are contrary to this right, if the cause of foundation of them be not previously supported by oath or affirmation; and if the order in the warrant to a civil officer to make search in suspected places, or to arrest one or more suspected persons, or to seize their property, be not accompanied with a special designation of the persons or objects of search, arrest, or seizure; and no warrant ought to be issued but in cases, and with the formalities, prescribed by the laws." According to a case tried in England at the time, if the goods named in the warrant are not found, then the one swearing out the warrant is a trespasser. As another contemporary said: "For every man's house is looked upon by the law to be his castle."

In 1810, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court (*Conner v. Commonwealth*) overturned a conviction because of a faulty warrant. If that is not the exclusionary rule, what is?

On the West

I always enjoy Chilton Williamson's writings. Yet when I hear him referring to incoming Californians (in *Polemics & Exchanges*, December 1995) as "fleeing the once-lovely state they have managed to ruin in a couple of generations . . . like locusts, they are moving in to find someplace else to consume," without noting that many are internal political refugees (quite a few prosperous, but no doubt less so in future waves), native Californians fleeing a state being wrecked by their national government's deranged and

utopian immigration policies, it makes me wish that Mr. Williamson would spend a little less time outside on horseback and a bit more time inside reading his own publication.

—Tom Andres
Santa Barbara, CA

Chilton Williamson Replies:

California was a mess long before the current invasion of immigrants, legal and illegal, completed the process of destruction. That does not mean, however, that

I lack sympathy for Mr. Andres' point of view. In fact, a book of mine, *The Immigration Mystique: America's False Conscience*, will be published in July by Basic Books. It was written entirely from the saddle, on the portable typewriter I carry along with the rest of my gear.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

ACCUSATIONS OF RACISM, unlike protestations of patriotism, are the first, not the last, refuge of scoundrels. In today's world the charge is the ultimate rhetorical weapon, the H-Bomb of public discourse. Even without accurate aim or effective delivery, it is guaranteed to destroy not only the intended target but associates and bystanders for miles around, thus obviating the necessity for follow-up precision strikes. Political and intellectual terrorists, gangsters, and assorted *fellahin* have not just learned to live with the bomb, they have grown to love it. And 50 years later, there will be no one around to apologize to.

Wes Pruden, editor-in-chief of the *Washington Times*, did not in so many words denounce Samuel Francis as a racist when, late last September, he fired him from his job as an editorial page writer for the newspaper. Unlike in June, however, when he had informed Francis that his staff column, always popular with the *Times's* readership, was being killed and his pay cut by 50 percent (a portion of which was later restored), he did give a specific reason. Several days earlier the *Washington Post* had printed a piece by Dinesh D'Souza, adapted from the author's recently published book *The End of Racism*, in which D'Souza, in the course of describing a meeting organized by Jared Taylor, editor of *American Renaissance*, at the Hilton Hotel in Atlanta in 1994, quoted Francis as telling an audience he was addressing that whites must reassert their identity and solidarity in explicit racial terms by articulating their racial consciousness. "The civilization that we as whites created in Europe and America," Francis said, "could not have been developed apart from the genetic endowments of the creating people, nor is there any reason to believe that the civilization can be successfully transmitted to a different people." According

to Pruden, D'Souza's account of Francis's remarks clinched growing doubts concerning the possibility that irreconcilable differences might exist between Sam Francis and his colleagues at the *Times*.

Francis, an award-winning editorial writer as well as the author of a nationally syndicated column, had worked for the paper for nine years. During that time, the editors had never killed one of Francis's columns. On the contrary, they had consistently praised it; and the annual employees' assessment report had regularly given Francis's work the highest, or near-highest, ratings in every service category. Earlier in the year, however, Pruden had flinched at a column in which Francis, having criticized the Southern Baptist Convention for publicly repenting of its support for slavery, denied that either the Bible or orthodox Christianity condemns this far-from-peculiar institution. Now, having read D'Souza's piece, he made the decision that Francis had to go. Pruden asked for Francis's "resignation," and received it.

The dismissal of Sam Francis was accepted philosophically by admirers and by his colleagues elsewhere than at the *Washington Times*, who had long since adapted to life in a world made safe for democratist ideology by neo-Stalinist tactics. But even before Francis left the *Times*, D'Souza himself was set on the hot seat by two black conservative scholars, Glenn Loury and Robert L. Woodson, Sr., when they resigned their positions with the American Enterprise Institute to protest the alleged racism of *The End of Racism*, which Woodson claimed to be "unworthy of an institution like AEI," no matter that the book had been published by the Free Press in New York. Apparently, Woodson and Loury consider themselves too pure, morally and intellectually speaking, to

maintain even the most casual association with a large organization including on its staff a single individual with whom they disagree. Be that as it may, the *Wall Street Journal* on October 19 printed an article, "Two Black Conservatives Are Now Searching for a New Home," which offended Christopher DeMuth, AEI's president, by what he described in a letter to the paper, published November 3, as its "juxtaposition of the deeply thoughtful and anguished Messrs. Loury and Woodson on the one hand, and the insensitive and incendiary Mr. D'Souza on the other." DeMuth, having defended *The End of Racism* as a book that had been praised or at least taken seriously by "serious intellectuals and politicians of all races and political creeds," noted that "its most practical consequence so far has been the firing of *Washington Times* columnist Samuel Francis over his remarks at a white supremacist gathering, chillingly documented in *The End of Racism*."

DeMuth's letter prompted an epistolary flurry around D'Souza, DeMuth, and Francis, to which the *Journal* devoted much of its Letters to the Editor department on November 13 and again on December 1. Among its correspondents was Jared Taylor, who claimed that while D'Souza's description of the *American Renaissance* conference as it appeared in his book was humorously inaccurate, it was nothing compared with what the author had originally written: an account so falsified and filled with errors that the Free Press, under pressure from participants in the conference who had read the galley proofs, pulped the entire first edition. More tellingly, Taylor suggested that the *American Renaissance* speakers had expressed opinions "far too close to Mr. D'Souza's for him plausibly to claim that we were beyond the pale." His point was seconded by Lawrence Auster

whose own letter, printed immediately below Taylor's, asserted that "the worst part . . . is that Mr. D'Souza, backed by his boss Christopher DeMuth, labels as 'bigots' and 'white supremacists' people who honestly believe what Mr. D'Souza himself evidently believes but doesn't want to admit."

Sam Francis has forthrightly stated his belief that "there are racial differences, there are natural differences between the races." Less forthrightly, but no less incriminatingly for political gumshoes looking for ideological dissidents to arrest, Dinesh D'Souza writes, "*The Bell Curve* makes a strong case that cannot be ignored. . . . The conclusion of most scholars is that despite many caveats, there is no scientific basis for rejecting the possibility that race differences in I.Q. are partly hereditary." The nearly identical nature of their conclusions notwithstanding, today Sam Francis is out of a job, while Dinesh D'Souza continues to get on the outside of several square meals daily at AEI's capacious trough. The reason for this unequal treatment? In Francis's own words: "My departure from the *Times* . . . was due less to the prowess of fraudulent scholars like Mr. D'Souza than to the discomfort of the *Times*'s editors with the expression of ideas (by no means confined to racial matters) that transgress the established boundaries that the *Times*, for all its chest-thumping about challenging conventional wisdom, is insistent on preserving." On the journalistic right, *National Review*'s is the only voice to have been heard raised in honorable protest against Establishment conservatism's latest transgression of the civilized principle of freedom of thought, and the constitutional one of freedom of expression, which gives the first effect.

—Chilton Williamson, Jr.

THE "IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY" was a charge the Republicans used to make against FDR, JFK, and LBJ, and a few of them have begun to use similar language against Mr. Clinton's personal crusade against Bosnian Christians. Asked by Dan Rather if there was a problem of "perception" in a draft-dodger sending men into a combat zone, the Commander-in-Chief, as his followers like to call him, replied simply: "I am the President."

This is a curious concept, that of the Commander-in-Chief. It used to mean

only that, as commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, the civilian President bore ultimate responsibility for military decisions. Today, we hear more and more that the President is "our" Commander-in-Chief, as if the title gave him military authority over the entire nation. "We have to support the Commander-in-Chief," say Mr. Clinton's Republican opponents. Since when? If the President violates the Constitution and rules like a military dictator, we are told that we must support his decisions, so long as there are American troops in the field. With the world situation as it is, this temporary dictatorship could easily become permanent. With all this talk of a new set of Nuremberg trials, it is strange that no one seems to remember the doctrine that came out of those trials: that no subordinate could exculpate his own crimes on the grounds of "following orders."

Yugoslavia is far from the only European country in which the Clinton administration is practicing imperialism. In Greece, the newspapers are reporting that the Germans, with the support of the United States, have already picked Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou's successor. The nakedness of the interference only fuels Greek anxieties over Macedonia and Epeiros, where there is a vocal Albanian minority. On the other side of Greece, the Muslims in Thrace are demanding recognition for their "Islamic State of Western Thrace," and their demands are reinforced by the Turkish government, which insists upon referring to these citizens of Greece as "Turks." Some Greek newspapers have also reported that NATO had planned maneuvers, or at least "map exercises," to protect Thracian Muslims during an imaginary uprising. The exercise included an exchange of populations—popularly known in genocidal Muslim circles as "ethnic cleansing"—and partial autonomy for Thrace. NATO officials denied the accusation, but by then Greek Christians had taken to the streets, carrying signs saying "No More Yugoslavias."

Perhaps the Greeks are only imagining things, although with Mr. Clinton on record, threatening the Serbs if they invade Kosovo (which is Serbian territory), they have a right to be afraid. Besides, Papandreou is still alive, and we have so far only conspired to pick his successor. Clinton has gone much farther in Poland, where ex-communist Alexander Kwasniewski received American assis-

tance in his successful campaign to unseat President Lech Walesa.

According to a report in *Gazeta Polska*, two of Mr. Kwasniewski's advisors were the guests of honor of the American government. Zbigniew Siemiatowski and Ireneusz Skubis, both officials in parties (the Polish Peasant Party in the former case, the Alliance of the Democratic Left in the latter) that have succeeded the Communist Party, were sent official invitations to take part in an extensive training program designed to teach political operatives how to manage a presidential campaign in the American style. The people in charge were apparently Bill Clinton's own campaign managers. The course included instructions on what kind of makeup to apply and what sort of background to emphasize to the Polish voters.

The invitations, issued by the American ambassador in Warsaw, Nicholas Rey, were sent only to Kwasniewski campaign workers. No other parties were asked to participate. Ambassador Rey was not available for comment, but reporters from the Catholic radio station "Plus" were able to reach Senator Jesse Helms, who said that the Republican Party, to his knowledge, was not aware of the extensive training being provided to ex-communists in Poland, and he promised to look into the matter.

Not so long ago Lech Walesa was a hero to many Americans, but more recently American journalists have been unanimous in criticizing his character and performance. How much of the case against Walesa is true, and how many of the charges are fictions concocted by the administration, remains uncertain. What is clear, however, is that Walesa's one great sin, at least in the eyes of the U.S. State Department, is his patriotism. For good or ill, he stood up for his own national interest and did not allow the United States to take over his country. This opens up a broad field for speculation. Is John Major still our man in Britain? Is Jacques Chirac's bullying stance on Bosnia due to his friendship with the United States or the need to patch things up with the Germans? Above all, are we getting ready to dump our number-one stooge, Boris Yeltsin, and if so, who is the designated successor? Mr. Gorbachev is waiting in the wings, but the American press is very interested in several nonentities who have no support outside of pro-American intellectuals. Imagine how much fun they

must have, those cases of arrested development that staff the State Department bureaucracy, playing at empire as if they were grown-ups who could grow beards and father children.

—Thomas Fleming

ANDREW LYTLE died on his couch at his log cabin home on December 12, 1995. Such a passing was and will be known as it can only be known by family and friends who shared with him a wealth of love. The intimacies of privacy were qualified as they must be by the ritual of funeral rites and burial, and by the announcement to the world that a man of note was gone into history—and mystery. But for the public there was and is still much to be remarked.

Andrew Nelson Lytle died in Montecagle, Tennessee, two weeks short of his 93rd birthday. He left much behind him—in his influence and in his books, a tremendous presence. But now too we must sense the force of his absence. No longer will he stand before his blazing hearth as the very image of the generous host—the most festive, the most supercharged of ritualists. The fire that he loved to stoke was an image of his internal energy and spirited personality, of his love of life and zest for conviviality. Mr. Lytle consumed his days with gusto and ignited them with laughter. Anyone who had ever been privileged to be warmed by that fire or to be lifted by the bourbon he dispensed from silver cups must have sensed that to be in that hall before that hearth, in the presence of that complex glow, was simply the best place in the world to be.

Mr. Lytle's generosity was not, I think, a mere social amenity, however gracious, but was rather a statement, even a metaphysical one, of principle. To him the joy of life was the truth of natural abundance, just as to him everything physical was animated by spirit. His storytelling was as sacramental as his tomatoes and his apples. Sharing them was a reflection of creation itself—the feast of life. He pointedly declined to participate in the heresy—"the present confusion," as he called it—which sanctions the image of existence rather than the substance of being. As long as he could, he kept up his garden and always lived in the shadow of Eden. Surely he was, as he liked to say, "an Old Christian."

Mr. Lytle had long since made his mark, his contribution—he had seen to

it that some part of his overflowing spirit was transmitted or transmuted. He did so in various ways. I suppose that the most social ways in which he did so were by his teaching at the University of Iowa, at the University of Florida, at the University of the South at Sewanee, and elsewhere. He did so above all as a specialist in "creative writing," a term he deplored. He was a writing coach and consultant who took intense and unstinting interest in the personal development of generations of students, some of whom became themselves accomplished writers. Flannery O'Connor and Madison Jones he regarded as the most gifted young writers he had known—and there were many others.

He also made a contribution as editor of the *Sewanee Review*, which he made particularly receptive to excellent fiction, a tradition that continues today. But surely his finest contribution, or at least his most visible one, was his own writing. The sheer brilliance of Andrew Lytle's literary criticism (gathered today in *Southerners and Europeans*), much of which reflected his work in the classroom, has tended to obscure his even more brilliant fiction, which is the cream of his work. His first novel, *The Long Night* (1936), was developed from a family legend and derives great strength from the oral tradition, as private obsession is overtaken by the enveloping violence of the Civil War. His second, *At the Moon's Inn* (1941), tells the epic and Faustian story of De Soto's march from Florida to the Mississippi, and is a fable solidly grounded in history. *A Name for Evil* (1947) can be seen as a daring revision of Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*—and also seen as surpassing its model. *The Velvet Horn* (1957) is usually thought to be Lytle's masterpiece.

Fiction did not altogether satisfy Lytle's need to tell stories. *A Wake for the Living* (1975) takes his ancestors and family through the cycle of American history, and the stories are true. Neither did old age silence him nor dim his response to literature. *Kristin* (1992), on Sigrid Undset's remarkable saga, is written as though Lytle had himself written *Kristin Lavransdatter*.

Andrew Lytle's first creative impulses were dramatic, but his first notable writing was historical and polemical. His biography of General Nathan Bedford Forrest (1931) still finds new readers. His contribution to the symposium *I'll Take My Stand* (1930) identified him as

the most literal of the Agrarians, and his longevity made him the last.

Mr. Lytle's life and work were all of a piece. His family was an image of history; his environment was concrete and ultimately biblical; his consciousness was mythical; his imagination was embodied in the words he shaped. He was uniquely aware that our monstrous materialism shrouds a profound emptiness, but also that the fullness of the Creation is an endless abundance. His politics were the politics of limits but also of love. He declared that the opposite of love was not hate, but lust for power, the results of which we live with.

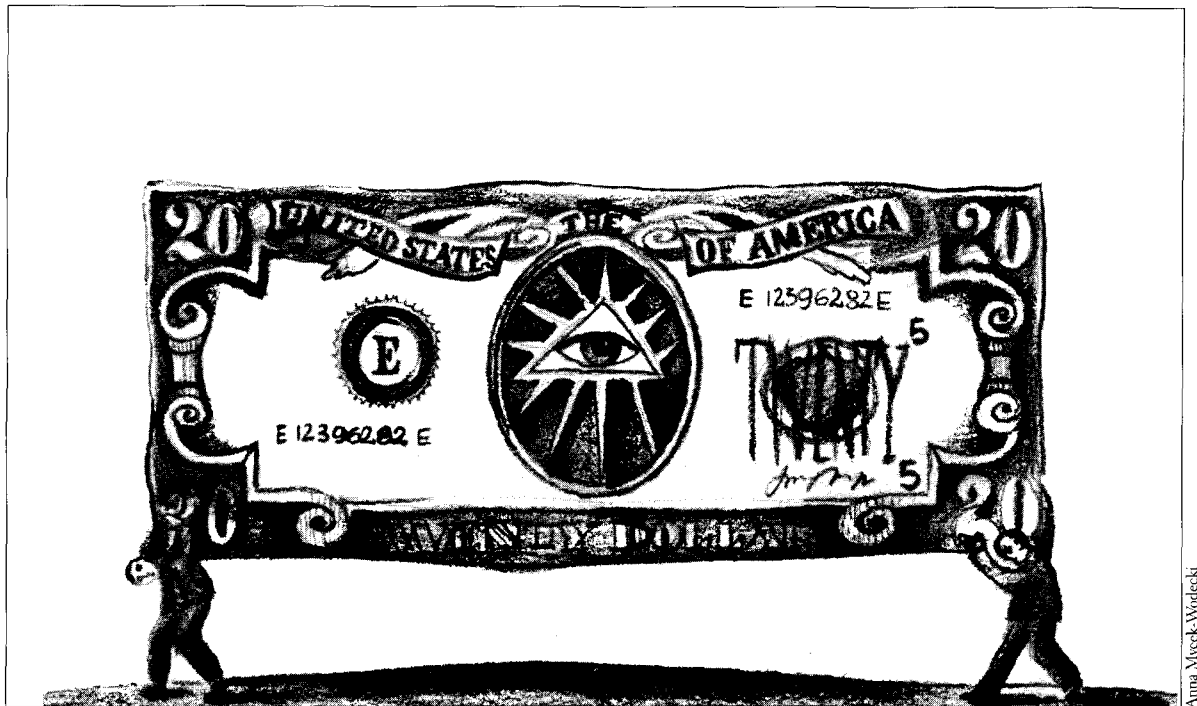
Now we will have to live without him, though not without what he left behind in accomplishment and in human connections. Andrew Lytle's departure has diminished the world of everyone who knew him. The answer to such a loss is to be found in the example of courtly manners, playful humor, and ironic consciousness exemplified by Andrew Lytle.

—J.O. Tate

OBITER DICTA: We are pleased to welcome novelist and essayist William Mills to our masthead as a corresponding editor and literary critic J.O. Tate as a contributing editor. William Mills has been contributing periodic travel pieces such as the "Letter From Chile" in our October issue and the "Letter From Caucasia" on page 38 of this issue. J.O. Tate, who teaches English at Dowling College on Long Island, is a regular contributor to our book review section, whose essay on Raymond Chandler can be found on page 30.

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From Bryan to Buchanan

by Thomas Fleming

It is an unwritten law of American politics that the politicians who devote themselves to the single-minded pursuit of power and wealth must pretend to be men of the people. The 1996 presidential campaign might have been scripted by Frank Capra, since virtually every candidate is a would-be John Doe or Jefferson Smith, taking on the Washington establishment in the name of the average guy like you and me.

Pat Buchanan or even Ross Perot might claim, with some justification, to represent middle American protest, but what about Lamar Alexander (winner of Tennessee's Al Gore look-alike contest) and Phil Gramm, who are running against Washington? So is Steve Forbes—the epitome of an elite-class insider. Congressman-for-life Newt Gingrich would like us to see him as the advance man for a Middle American revolution against Congress, while Bill Clinton represents himself as one of the boys from Arkansas standing up against the wicked Republican establishment. (By all accounts, these Arkansas boys could teach a thing or two to their counterparts in Newark and Palermo.) Even Bob “I’ll-be-anything-you-want-me-to-be, you-want-me-to-be-Ronald Reagan-I’ll-be-Ronald-Reagan” Dole occasionally grunts out some Middle American platitudes about lower taxes or dirty movies.

Yes, we’re all populists now. Wealthy actor and big business spokesman Ronald Reagan was a populist; so was Annapolis graduate and peanut factor Jimmy Carter; and so, in 1968, was

Richard Nixon, the politician Lyndon Johnson admired most. Johnson may well be the last man to run as an unabashed representative of what big government can do for you, which turned out to be killing our sons in Vietnam and bankrupting their grandchildren with deficit spending.

What, exactly, is a populist? Most people would, without thinking, exclude machine politicians like LBJ and spoiled rich boys like—fill in the blanks—but it is no easy task to discern a philosophy or a set of goals, apart from the resentment of the unwashed for the washed, that connects Andrew Jackson with William Jennings Bryan, Ben Tillman with Ross Perot, Tom Watson with Burt Wheeler or Pat Buchanan. One standard view is that populism is little more than the perennial protest of taxpayers against tax consumers, of wealth producers against wealth breeders (i.e., those who live off dividends and speculation), of the periphery against the center. Populism, on this understanding, is only a symptom of a disease, of interest only to political sociologists and other pathologists who have learned to hold their nose long enough to take a close look at the politics of this great democracy.

There is another view, put forward by some libertarians, which makes populism one corner of a four-sided political box that also includes conservatives, liberals, and libertarians. Here the point of discrimination is the attitude toward government. Conservatives, for example, want limited government in eco-

conomic matters but strong social control in matters of traditional morality; liberals are the opposite. Populists, according to this theory, favor economic control and traditional morality, while the purist libertarians support minimal government across the board. There is some descriptive validity to such an approach, but like so many views taken from 30,000 feet, it is entirely detached from ground-level politics.

I do not pretend to know what, if anything, are the permanent distinguishing characteristics of populism. Instead of spinning the wheels of speculation, I would rather begin by looking for evidence in the career of a man who, if not exactly a populist, fulfilled the longings of American populists for nearly 30 years: William Jennings Bryan. Bryan is a complex character: a reactionary who thought of himself as a progressive liberal, a demagogic orator who prided himself on mastering the facts, a cracker-barrel philosopher who rarely knew the details of an issue but always penetrated to the essence. If there was a good angel of the American character from 1896 to the 1920's, it was Bryan.

Born to Southern parents in Illinois, Bryan did not move west to Nebraska until he had finished school and practiced law for some time. He was 27 years old when he took his wife to Lincoln, a Republican stronghold and a very unlikely place from which to launch the career of a Democratic politician. Bryan made his name by opposing his own President, Grover Cleveland, on the gold standard.

The bimetallism case is complex. Some supporters were owned by the silver lobby, which had considerable influence in the West; others, like Bryan, were defending the interests of indebted farmers. This has been seen as the perennial demand of farmers—and, indeed, of all debtors—for cheap money and inflation, but in Bryan's view, going on the gold standard was a decision to increase the purchasing power of money, with the result that a \$1000 mortgage taken out when the country was on a bimetal standard might have to be paid back with money whose purchasing power was a great deal more.

Bryan saw silver as a moral question that divided working men from their exploiters: "The poor man is called a socialist if he believes that the wealth of the rich should be divided among the poor, but the rich man is called a financier if he devises a plan by which the pittance of the poor can be converted to his use. The poor man who takes property by force is a thief, but the creditor who can by legislation make a debtor pay a dollar twice as large as he borrowed is lauded as the friend of a sound currency."

For Bryan, all the talk from businessmen about an "honest dollar" was hypocrisy: "There is not and never has been an honest dollar," which he defined as a currency "absolutely stable in relation to all other things." An unstable currency inevitably benefited some people at the expense of others, and conversion to the gold standard was simply a means of stealing from the rich and giving to the poor—in other words, politics as usual. His speech, delivered in Congress in August of 1893, marked Bryan both as a defender of the farmer and as an unreliable Democrat. He wisely did not seek reelection in 1894.

Over the next two years, ex-Congressman Bryan, repudiated by the leadership of his own party, laid his highly improbable plans to win the Democratic nomination for the presidency. What no one counted on was the power of his voice and the force of his character. (Microphones virtually eliminated the orator's advantage over the schemer). By good luck and a little

finagling, the boy orator of the Platte ended up the final speaker in the debate over silver. This "Cross of Gold" speech, although it contained nothing that Bryan had not said before, was a masterpiece of American oratory. Without electricity or amplification, he electrified the audience. There is probably no single speech since the days of Patrick Henry that has done so much.

Putting himself squarely in the Jeffersonian tradition of his party, he declared himself an heir to the Jacksonian revolution: "What we need is an Andrew Jackson to stand, as Jackson stood, against the encroachments of organized wealth." Bryan drew the line between (in Carlyle's words) "the idle holders of capital" and the "struggling masses, who produce the wealth and pay the taxes"; between the East (while insisting he had "not one word against those who live on the Atlantic coast") and "the hardy pioneers who have braved all the dangers of the wilderness . . . who rear their children near to Nature's heart, where they can mingle their voices with the voices of the birds—out there where they have erected schoolhouses for the education of their young, churches where they praise their creator . . ."

The populist, in defending the economic interests of Main Street against Wall Street, inevitably pits the vigorous West against the degenerate East, and Bryan, when he was not running for national office, was not always so reticent about the East. Returning to Nebraska after his resignation as Secretary of State, he "congratulated the people upon living 36 hours from New York . . . the Allegheny Mountains are the salvation of the rest of the country, as they serve as a dike to keep the prejudice, the venom, the insolence, and the ignorance of the New York press from inundating the Mississippi valley."

In Chicago, Bryan was—as he always was—on the side of reality, of real people against the cruel theories that robbed them of their livelihood, their hope, and their faith: "You come to us and tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

His defense of reality over abstraction drove him, in the last days of his life, to participate in the Scopes Trial, where he hoped to affirm a living faith in the living God, as opposed to the dry and deadly speculations of the Darwinists. He never pretended to have a grasp of scientific theory, and in private he confessed that he did not know whether or not the Darwinists were right on the facts. What he did know was that high school and college Darwinism was corrupting the morals of the students, and in response to Darrow's plea for freedom of thought and expression in Dayton, he quoted Darrow's defense of "Babe" Leopold in Chicago. Leopold was one of two spoiled rich boys who had committed a brutal and pointless murder. In his defense, Darrow had put the blame on Nietzsche: "Is there any blame attached because somebody took Nietzsche's philosophy seriously and fashioned his life upon it?" Upholding the right of universities to teach such dangerous doctrines, Darrow still insisted that these modern teachings had "meant the death of many."

Bryan declared this ACLUism a "damnable philosophy," and declared—without in any way extenuating the crime—the university guilty of corrupting souls. "When you go back to the root of the question, you will find that the legislature not only

had a right to protect the students from the evolutionary hypothesis but was in duty bound to do so." For Bryan, what mattered most was not the facts of Darwinism or the economic interests served by a monetary policy; what counted was the character of the people—both individually, when it came to salvation, and nationally, when it was a question of political morality. Bryan opposed colonialism, not only because of the effect it had on the colonial subjects but even more for its influence on the imperial nation.

Poorly informed on international affairs, Bryan at first welcomed the revolutions against the Spanish colonial empire that broke out in the 1890's. Bryan had no martial talent or inclinations, but he did volunteer as a private and at first refused, when his fellow-volunteers elected him colonel. He resigned, when it dawned on him that the imperialists intended not to destroy colonialism but to replace a Spanish empire with an American version.

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Bryan was shrewd enough to realize that whatever benefits might attach to colonial empires, they were reserved to monarchies: "The fruits of imperialism, be they bitter or sweet, must be left to the subjects of monarchy. This is the one tree of which the citizens of a republic may not partake. It is the voice of the serpent, not the voice of God, that bids us eat."

Imperialism invariably increases the power of the military, and, Bryan pointed out, there had been a fourfold increase of America's standing army from 1896 to 1899. "A large standing army . . . is ever a menace to a republican form of government." Progressive imperialists like Teddy Roosevelt, however much they might have dressed themselves up in sheepskinned hypocrisy, were the same old warmongering wolves that had always plagued the human race. At the St. Louis convention in 1904, Bryan described the speech of Governor Black in nominating TR as "a eulogy of war . . . an exalting of the doctrine of brute force."

Imperialism must either make aliens citizens—virtually inconceivable in the case of the Philippines—or make them subjects by force. "In what respect does the position of the Republican party differ from the position taken by the English government in 1776?" To the apostles of democratic globalism and jackbooted human rights, Bryan replied: "Force can defend a right, but force has never yet created a right."

Even more repulsive than old-fashioned imperialism was the hypocrisy of Anglophile Republicans who wanted to liberate Spanish possessions but expressed no sympathy for Republican Boers. Picking up the theme of Anglo-Saxon jingoism, Bryan argued that self-government was the genius of the Anglo-Saxon, but that the American had raised this creed to a Golden Rule: "Anglo-Saxon civilization has taught the individ-

ual to protect his own rights, American civilization will teach him to respect the rights of others."

The Republicans insisted that they were going to educate the Filipinos in the ways of democracy, but Bryan pointed out the obvious flaw: "If we expect to maintain a colonial policy, we shall not find it to our advantage to educate the people. The educated Filipinos are now in revolt against us. . . . If we are to govern them without their consent and give them no voice in determining the taxes which they must pay, we dare not educate them, lest they learn to read the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States and mock us for our inconsistency."

The messianic democratists preached conversion of the world by the sword, but, asked Bryan, "If true Christianity consists in carrying out in our daily lives the teaching of Christ, who will say that we are commanded to civilize with dynamite and proselyte with the sword?"

Bryan did not change his mind on imperialism in the years following the Spanish-American War, and as Secretary of State he labored mightily—without the support of the President whose nomination he had secured—to keep the United States out of the great European bloodletting. Unfortunately, his cabinet position precluded any open attacks on Wilson's policies, and once his country had entered the war, the patriotic Bryan kept his peace. The best he could do was to resign in protest over Wilson's one-sided support of England. In particular he urged Wilson to discourage Americans from traveling on ships that might be attacked, and he wanted to forbid American passenger ships from carrying munitions. He guessed immediately that the *Lusitania* was carrying war materiel and therefore a justifiable target for the German navy.

Bryan was a politician, not a philosopher, and it is easy to point to occasions in his career when he seems to have betrayed his principles. The same can be said of Robert Taft or, indeed, of any great statesman. The statesman's task—unlike that of the philosopher or the pure politician—is complex. He must chart a course for his nation, or at least that part of the nation willing to follow him. In this he resembles the philosopher or pundit, but he must also deal with each situation and opportunity as it presents itself. Refusal to compromise is self-indulgence, not probity.

Bryan faithfully maintained his central convictions throughout his career: he championed the rights of the wealth-creating growers and makers of things against their exploiters, the sound Heartland against the decadent East, the Old Republic against the evil empire that Theodore Roosevelt and his friends were constructing. TR had his virtues, and Bryan had his weaknesses, but these two men can be taken to represent the two possibilities of American national life in the 20th century. The Speaker of the House of Representatives apparently thinks so too. According to Fred Barnes in a wonderfully naive piece in the first number of what some conservatives are calling the *Weekly Reader*: "Gingrich's model . . . is not FDR, but three Republican leaders at the turn of the century: Presidents William McKinley . . . and Theodore Roosevelt . . . and Republican strategist Mark Hanna. The struggle between these Republicans and William Jennings Bryan, the chronic Democratic presidential candidate, has 'remarkable parallels to where the two parties are today,' Gingrich argues. 'Bryan was a remarkably shallow but emotionally effective demagogue, maximizing class warfare and a sense of fear in order to avoid moderniza-

tion. McKinley, Roosevelt, and Hanna represented the rise of modern America.”

Setting aside the potted history—calling Mark Hanna a strategist is like calling Al Capone a businessman—one has to concede the Speaker’s point. The battle lines in 1896 were clearly drawn: McKinley and Hanna represented the forces of “modernization”—big business linked to big government, the masters of war and the builders of empire, big profits from a consumerism that preys upon families and subverts all morality. Bryan, on the other hand, was a simple man speaking the language of Jefferson and the Bible. This stark comparison is not entirely fair to the victor: in truth, Bill McKinley was not the worst Republican who has ever sat in the White House. Both he and his crooked mentor were reluctant imperialists: unlike the Bull Moose, they had boodle, not conquest on their minds.

It is strange how this century is ending as it began. Ideas and myths that we had thought dead and buried suddenly reappear. No one, we should have thought, at this late date, could possibly think of rehabilitating the “Ohio Dynasty” of American politics. In his 1932 novel *The Farm*, Ohioan Louis Bromfield wrote of the good old days of Ohio before “the War of Secession.” Bromfield was almost nostalgic for the old-fashioned Midwestern politician “with his chicanery, his opportunism, and his hypocrisy born more of the times and the sketchy ethics of a people greedy for quick riches than of any individual baseness. . . . Ohio had not yet produced her array of weak Presidents and corrupt, arrogant, and unscrupulous ‘bosses.’”

Then the war came, which turned the country over to the profiteers and swindlers. The 1870’s and 80’s were an orgy of greed that equally disgusted men as opposite in character as Henry Adams and Mark Twain, but it was in the next “splendid little war” that our national character was completely corrupted. Bromfield, looking back, summed up the 90’s: “Everything was ‘bully’ with the colonel of the Rough Riders, and Senator Lodge was weaving a mesh of chicanery and bad faith to force the American people into a wild career of imperialism.”

Going to school in those years meant an indoctrination that might have been drafted by Mr. Barnes. The object was to fill the “budding citizens with a blind enthusiasm for a government (and so for themselves) regardless of its folly, its corruption, and hypocrisy. There was even an effort made to make us believe that the President was a sacrosanct creature, incapable of wrong, yet at home . . . [he] had heard of McKinley and Hanna and he knew that his own state had produced a whole crop of feeble Presidents and scoundrelly politicians.”

Such was the choice in 1896. On one side stood the forces of corruption and imperialism masquerading as free enterprise and patriotism, and on the other stood Bryan and the Populists. It is the same choice today. In the entire field of presidential candidates, there is only one man speaking on behalf of middle Americans, and he too has been accused (in the *Wall Street Journal*, for example) of inciting “class warfare”; he is one of the few political leaders willing to use the language of our old-time religion to combat the grotesque heresies of “modernization,” and he is the only candidate who has consistently opposed American adventurism in Somalia, the Persian Gulf, and the Balkans (where his pro-Croatian prejudices have driven him to—but never over—the brink into interventionism).

Like Bryan, Pat Buchanan may be wrongheaded in some of his policies, but he has his heart in the right place, in defending the interests of ordinary Americans against the transnational

elite class that has leveraged its way into ownership of most of the free world. After 100 years, we have the same choice before us, but it is not between Democrats and Republicans. The debate over the budget revealed that the differences between the congressional Republicans and the administration were all questions of degree, not of fundamental principle.

It is not a contest between Democrats and Republicans, but between one republican and the imperialists in both parties. There are good arguments to be made in favor of empire, and they were made honestly by Roosevelt I and disingenuously by Roosevelt II, and the public interest would be better served if Messrs. Dole and Clinton would make their case openly and without subterfuge. But even if they do not, the choice between republic and empire is clear enough even for a Harvard Ph.D. to see it. If Americans refuse to see the election in this cold light of day, then they probably do not deserve to hold onto even the fig leaf of free elections concealing the naked *libido dominandi* that is the one reality of our political life.

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LIBERAL ARTS



THE CROSS OF GOLD

“If they say bimetallism is good, but that we cannot have it until other nations help us, we reply that, instead of having a gold standard because England has, we will restore bimetallism, and then let England have bimetallism because the United States has it. If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we will fight them to the uttermost. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.”

—William Jennings Bryan, 1896

From Household to Nation

The Middle American Populism of Pat Buchanan

by Samuel Francis



Anna Myreck-Wodnicki

If there was any major difference between the presidential campaign of Pat Buchanan in 1995 and his first run at the Republican nomination in 1992, it was the relative calm with which his enemies greeted the announcement of his second candidacy and his rapid move last year to the forefront of the Republican field. Rabbi Avi Weiss and his goon platoons still found time and someone else's money to dog Buchanan's steps from New Hampshire to California, and occasionally some other hired thug, usually a failed neoconservative politician, would emerge from the political graveyard to moan about Buchanan's "fascism," his "nativism," or his "racism." But in general, even Buchanan's most left-wing critics found the man himself likable and many of his ideas compelling. Tom Carson of the *Village Voice* traveled with the Buchanan Brigades in Iowa last spring, and despite the agony of enduring a couple of weeks slumming in the Heartland, he could not help but be drawn to the popular insurgency the candidate was mounting. "I've been waiting my whole life for someone running for president to talk about the Fortune 500 as the enemy," Mr. Carson told Buchanan, "and when I finally get my wish, it turns out to be you."

Of course, there was criticism. In the early stages, its main thrust—from conservatives—was that Buchanan could not possibly win the nomination, let alone the election, and that his image as a fringe candidate, the notorious organizational weaknesses persisting from the 1992 campaign, and the lack of

adequate money this time would stop him from becoming any more than a divisive vote-taker from real winners like Phil Gramm. By the end of the year, the Texas Republican had largely faded from the discussion, though his bottomless pit of contributions kept him in the race. The more recent polls show Buchanan leading or matching Gramm in key early states like New Hampshire and Iowa, and by last summer Pat's fund-raising was outstripping that of the Texan's opulent money machine. It was beginning to look as though the boys who put their dollar on Mr. Gramm had backed the wrong pony.

But despite Buchanan's emergence as a major candidate, most serious observers believed he could not win the nomination, let alone the election, and that belief itself, widespread among conservatives preoccupied with getting rid of Bill Clinton, threatened to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. For those on the right who want only to oust the incumbent resident of the White House or impress their friends with invitations to the court soirees of the next Republican successor to the presidential purple, winning the election is all that matters, and Buchanan's supposed unelectability was enough to make them lose interest. But the courtiers and professional partisans miss the larger victory the Buchanan campaign is on the eve of winning. If Buchanan loses the nomination, it will be because his time has not yet come, but the social and political forces on which both his campaigns have been based will not disappear, and even if he does lose, he will have won a place in history as an architect of the victory those forces will eventually build.

The importance of the Buchanan campaign lies not in its capacity to win the nomination or the national election but in its

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organization of those forces into a coherent political coalition. That coalition includes the remnants of the "Old Right," as well as various single-issue constituencies (pro-lifers, anti-immigration activists, protectionists) to which Buchanan is one of the few voices to speak. But it would be a serious error to squeeze Buchanan into an orthodox conservative pigeonhole from which he is merely trying to lead a replay of the Goldwater campaign, the candidacies of John Ashbrook or Phil Crane, or the Reagan movement, and especially in the last year he has expressed and developed ideas with which most adherents of the conventional American right—mainstream conservative, paleoconservative, or libertarian—are not comfortable. But conventional conservative doctrines today are virtually extinct politically, for the simple reason that the social groups that found them expressive of their interests and values no longer exist or no longer are able to command a significant political following, and as a result, conservative ideological candidates like Alan Keyes or Robert Dornan who insist on campaigning on those doctrines rise no higher than two to three percent in the polls. One major reason for the underestimation of Buchanan's prospects and for the surprise with which most analysts have greeted his unexpected success lay in their mistaken assumption that Buchanan was simply yet another right-wing protestor, calling the party and those parts of the nation that would listen to him to pick up the torch of doctrine and wave it until the waters of political and cultural darkness extinguished it. The reason Buchanan has not been submerged is that the torch he carries illuminates new social forces that only now are forming a common political consciousness. What is important about these forces is not that a campaign centered on them does not now win major elections (indeed, it would be a fatal error if they succeeded in winning prematurely) but that the Buchanan campaign for the first time in recent history offers them an organized mode of expression that will allow them to develop and mature their consciousness and their power.

Those forces consist, of course, of the broad social and cultural spectrum of Middle America. Middle American groups are more and more coming to perceive their exploitation at the hands of the dominant elites. The exploitation works on several fronts—economically, by hypertaxation and the design of a globalized economy dependent on exports and services in place of manufacturing; culturally, by the managed destruction of Middle American norms and institutions; and politically, by the regimentation of Middle Americans under the federal leviathan.

The significant polarization within American society is between the elites, increasingly unified as a ruling class that relies on the national state as its principal instrument of power, and Middle America itself, which lacks the technocratic and managerial skills that yield control of the machinery of power. Other polarities and conflicts within American society—between religious and secular, white and black, national and global, worker and management—are beginning to fit into this larger polarity of Middle American and Ruling Class. The Ruling Class uses and is used by secularist, globalist, antiwhite, and anti-Western forces for its and their advantage.

The interests that drive Middle American social and political forces are considerably different from those that drove the groups that generally supported one or another version of "conservatism" in the era during and after the New Deal. Old Right conservatism was a body of ideas that appealed mainly to businessmen of the *haute bourgeoisie* and their localized, middle-

class adherents, a social base that 20th-century social and economic transformations effectively wiped out. Old Right conservatism defended a limited, decentralized, and largely neutral national government and the ethic of small-town, small-business, Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. As the social base of the Old Right withered in the post-Depression and post-World War II eras, the political and intellectual right essentially divorced itself from these declining interests and forces and evolved new and far less socially rooted ideologies that represented almost no one outside the narrow academic and journalistic circles that formulated them.

By the 1950's and 60's, "movement" conservatives habitually quibbled with each other over the subtler points of their doctrines like late medieval Scholastic theologians, and the doctrines themselves—a bastardized libertarianism that only vaguely resembled its classical liberal and Old Whig ancestors, globalist anticommunism that slowly garbed itself in the costumes of Wilsonian democratism, and increasingly abstruse metaphysical and theological ponderosities—attracted none but dissident intellectuals and proved useless as vehicles for transporting a mass following to electoral victory.

Neoconservatism, emerging in the late 1960's and early 70's, was even worse. Far less cerebral than the abstractions churned out by 1950's conservative intellectualism, but quicker on the draw when it came to political showdowns, neoconservatism gained the adherence of no one but still other eggheads alienated from the establishment left and contemptuous of their newfound allies on the right.

Given the collapse of the social base of the right and the addiction of right-wing intellectuals to ideological navel-gazing, the political right could no longer develop serious political strategies. All it could do was pick up odd clusters of voters who were fearful of crime, resentful of racial integration, worried about communist takeovers, eager to remove federal fingers from their pockets, or passionate about the defense of business interests, the last subject never straying far from what remained of the right-wing mind. One way or another, the right managed to keep congressional seats and occasionally win the odd presidential election, but its victories were flukish, depending on the foibles of the opposition, and it was unable either to penetrate or dislodge the dominant culture created by the left or to win the firm allegiance of Middle Americans. There was enough in the rhetoric of Richard Nixon's "New Majority" and Ronald Reagan's appeal to Southern and blue-collar Democrats to stitch together momentary triumphs, but the persistent residues of pro-business conservative ideology and the failure to deliver on social and cultural commitments to Middle American constituencies prevented the consolidation of an enduring coalition with real roots in existing social forces and the culture those forces supported.

Middle Americans, emerging from the ruins of the old independent middle and working classes, found conservative, libertarian, and pro-business Republican ideology and rhetoric irrelevant, distasteful, and even threatening to their own socioeconomic interests. The post-World War II middle class was in reality an affluent proletariat, economically dependent on the federal government through labor codes, housing loans, educational programs, defense contracts, and health and unemployment benefits. All variations of conservative doctrine rejected these as illegitimate extensions of the state and boasted of plans to abolish most of them, and Middle American allegiance to political parties and candidates espousing such

doctrine could never become firm. Yet, at the same time, the Ruling Class proved unable to uproot the social, cultural, and national identities and loyalties of the Middle American proletariat, and Middle Americans found themselves increasingly alienated from the political left and its embrace of antinational policies and countercultural manners and morals.

Thus, there emerged a chronic Middle American political dilemma: while the left could win Middle Americans through its economic measures, it lost them through its social and cultural radicalism, and while the right could attract Middle Americans through appeals to law and order and defense of sexual normality, conventional morals and religion, traditional social institutions, and invocations of nationalism and patriotism, it lost Middle Americans when it rehearsed its old bourgeois economic formulas. Middle American votes could be won by whichever side of the political spectrum was better at feeding anxieties over cultural rot or economic catastrophe, but neither an increasingly antinational and countercultural left nor an increasingly pro-business right could expect to stabilize Middle American political loyalties sufficiently to sustain a national coalition.

The persistence of the division of the political spectrum into "right" and "left" has therefore served to prevent the formation of a distinct Middle American political consciousness and the emergence of a new identity synthesizing both the economic interests and cultural-national loyalties of the proletarianized middle class in a separate and unified political movement. But today and in the future this division will no longer obtain. Middle American political loyalties are ceasing to be torn between a left and a right that are increasingly convergent and indistinguishable. Aside from the ideological castration of the spokesmen of both sides in recent years, the main cause of the evanescence of right and left lies in the triumph of economic globalization.

The globalization of the American economy (and culture and population) not only presents a more immediate threat to Middle American economic interests than the prospect of the libertarian and pro-business let-'em-eat-cake policies of the right but also strips the right of its capacity to appeal to Middle Americans at all. As champions of the globalist right like Jack Kemp, Phil Gramm, Steve Forbes, Newt Gingrich, Ben Wattenberg, George Gilder, Robert Bartley, Julian Simon, and George Will never tire of explaining, globalization means the disappearance of nationality, of cultures closely linked to national identity, probably of national sovereignty itself, and even of the distinctive populations of which nations are composed. By signing on to globalization, then, the right has effectively metamorphosed itself into the left and forfeited the sole grounds of its appeal to the nationalism and social and cultural conservatism that continue to animate Middle Americans. The right may still thump its chest about crime and abortion, and its leaders may still thunder about sex and violence in movies they have never seen, but even on these issues the right's obsession with economic uplift as a panacea for crime, welfare, and moral decline emasculates its older defense of national interests and cultural order. The only reason the Republican Party has not already jettisoned its anti-abortion positions, and the only reason Bob Dole continues to complain about movies and television programs, is the influence of the large, militant, and well-organized "religious right," itself a Middle American movement though one that can never exert more than a limited appeal.

Having denuded itself of any reason for Middle Americans to support it, the right can no longer expect the Reagan Democrats to return to the Republican column. Given a choice between only the globalist right and the equally globalist and countercultural left, Middle Americans may well support the latter (they did so in 1992 by voting for Clinton over Bush), because at least the left can be expected not to gut the entitlement programs with which Middle American economic interests are linked. The 1994 Republican congressional sweep was less a mandate for the GOP than a frenetic quest by alienated voters to attach themselves to some political entity that just might resist the Ruling Class and its regime and embrace the agenda of Middle Americans. There was little danger of that from "revolutionaries" like Mr. Gingrich, and in the past year or so the sprouting of militia groups, the land war in the Western states, the religious right itself, and the popularization of conspiracy theories that at least symbolically convey the hostility and hatred with which the popular mind regards the federal leviathan and the elites attached to it testify to the political and cultural alienation that now stalks through the nation.

While Buchanan rightly distances himself from the more bizarre and pathological expressions of Middle American unrest, no candidate in the fields of either party has so clearly adopted the central message of the Middle American revolt. His columns and commentary in the months prior to his announcement of his candidacy began developing an economic doctrine that radically departed from conventional free-market and free-trade ideology, the main source of Middle American distaste for Republicans of the mainstream right. Buchanan continues to support economic deregulation, a flat tax, and the abolition of taxes on inheritances, family farms and businesses of less than \$2 million, but in his last months as a commentator he devoted a series of columns to attacking the "myth of Economic Man" and formulating what he called "a conservatism of the heart" and "economic nationalism," pegged on his active opposition to NAFTA, GATT, the World Trade Organization, and the \$50-billion Mexican bailout.

The core of his message consists of a rejection of the thinly masked economic determinism espoused by Kemp, Gramm, and Gingrich and an affirmation of the primacy of cultural identity, national sovereignty, and national interests over economic goals. Increasingly, his economic nationalism seems to define and drive his whole candidacy, informing even his cultural conservatism, though the concept of "economic" implicit in his writing and speeches is considerably broader than conventional concepts of either the left or the right. "Economics," it should be recalled, derives from Greek words meaning "household management," and the purpose of economic life in Buchanan's worldview is not simply to gain material satisfaction but to support families and the social institutions and identities that evolve from families as the fundamental units of human society and human action.

Thus, his "America First" foreign policy is more than the isolationism preached by the old America First Committee and considerably more than the neo-isolationism supported today by most paleoconservatives. For Buchanan, "America First" implies not only putting national interests over those of other nations and abstractions like "world leadership," "global harmony," and the "New World Order," but also giving priority to the nation over the gratification of individual and subnational interests. Protectionism, to replace the federal taxes Buchanan

would abolish and to “insulate the wages of U.S. workers from foreign laborers who must work for \$1 an hour or less,” follows from his economic nationalism, reflecting the economic interests and identity of the nation, just as a defense and foreign policy follows from his political nationalism, reflecting the political interests and identity of the nation. So, for that matter, does his support for curtailing, through a five-year moratorium, all immigration, legal as well as illegal.

Buchanan’s nationalism appears to break with the specter of individualism that has haunted American conservative ideology since the 1930’s. It is based on the premise that the individual outside social and cultural institutions is an abstraction, and it probably shows Buchanan’s debt to Catholic social theory rather than the atomistic and acquisitive egoism that descends to the libertarian right from John Locke. In one column, Buchanan supported the “humane economy” espoused by the Catholic Austrian School economist Wilhelm Röpke in contrast (not quite accurately, as I am told) to the acquisitive economic individualism of Ludwig von Mises. More recently, the *New York Times* quotes him as remarking,

We have to ask ourselves as conservatives what it is we want to conserve in America. I believe in the market system, but I don’t worship the market system. I don’t worship at the altar of economic efficiency as I believe some so-called conservatives do. To prefer a 100,000-hog confinement to hundreds of family farms, it seems to me, is not conservatism. I mean, that’s to worship as a super-market civilization.

Yet, while Buchanan’s nationalism may tweak the noses of right-wing individualists, it also breaks significantly with the large-state nationalist tradition of Europe and American Hamiltonians, for whom the centralized state defines and even creates the nation. Unlike liberal protectionists like Richard Gephardt, Buchanan seeks to use tariffs as substitutes for federal taxes, not as additional taxes. His statement of principles endorses “restoration of the 10th Amendment,” holding that “many functions of the federal government are, de facto, unconstitutional” (he might have added de jure as well) and encompassing abolition of major cabinet-level departments. He also calls for stripping federal judges of power through judicial term limits, “voter recall of renegade federal jurists,” and eight-year reconfirmations of Supreme Court justices. For Buchanan, in contrast to large-state nationalists, the nation is fundamentally a social and cultural unit, not the creation of the state and its policies, but a continuing, organic body that transcends individuals and gives identity to itself through a common way of life and a common people. It is the national culture, embodied in the way of life and the people themselves, rather than the national state, that defines the nation, and hence cultural traditionalism is as central to Buchanan’s nationalism as swollen statism is to European and Hamiltonian nationalists. The “cultural war” for Buchanan is not Republican swaggering about family values and dirty movies but a battle over whether the nation itself can continue to exist under the onslaught of the militant secularism, acquisitive egoism, economic and political globalism, demographic inundation, and unchecked state centralism supported by the Ruling Class.

Also unlike the conventional right, Buchanan does not confine his criticism of the Ruling Class to federal bureaucrats. Though he denies that he considers “big business an enemy,”

he told Tom Carson of the *Village Voice*, in a line he has repeated elsewhere, “I just think a lot of modern corporate capitalists—the managerial class basically—has no loyalty to any country anymore, or any particular values other than the bottom line.” The remark points to a conception of the Ruling Class as fundamentally disengaged from the nation and culture it dominates, and resembles similar views of 20th-century ruling elites voiced by Joseph Schumpeter, the late Christopher Lasch, and James Burnham, among others.

Buchanan’s loyalty to the GOP is touching, especially since almost no Republican leader or conservative pundit has much good to say about him, and the loudest mouths for the ‘Big Tent’ are always the first to try to push him out of it.

Buchanan thus seems to share the perception that the fundamental polarity in American politics and culture today is between a deracinated and self-serving Ruling Class centered on but not confined to the central state, on the one hand, and Middle American groups, on the other, with the latter constituting both the economic core of the nation through their labor and productive skills as well as the culturally defining core that sustains the identity of the nation itself. The economic interests as well as the cultural habits and ideologies of the Ruling Class drive it toward globalization—the managed destruction of the nation, its sovereignty, its culture, and its people—while those of Middle Americans drive them toward support for and reinforcement of the nation and its organic way of life. The implicit recognition of this polarity by the Buchanan campaign places him firmly on the side of Middle Americans more clearly than any other political figure in the country today.

The only figure who could rival him for that role is Ross Perot, but Perot’s ideas, despite their focus on Middle Americans, are far less sophisticated, far less visionary, and far less radical than those of the former columnist and presidential speechwriter. Perot appears to have little grasp of the nature of the Ruling Class as a systemic entity, and his tirades against the central state never seem to rise above the level of grouching about corruption, incompetence, waste, and fraud. Perot seems to lack any perception of the structure of the state as problematic and confines his criticism merely to the abuse of the state structure. Buchanan’s critique of the central state, at least implicitly, is shaped by his comprehension that the flaws

of the state as it is presently structured derive from its control and exploitation by the Ruling Class, that the elites themselves are the real enemy and that the state, while far too large and intrusive, is simply their instrument. Control of the state by a social force or elite different from the forces that now control it could shape the state to support Middle American interests and values rather than crush them.

Hence, Buchanan has rattled free-market antistatist conservatives by his support for higher unemployment benefits for displaced workers, and last fall he tossed a brick at congressional Republicans who were insisting on cutting the growth of Medicare. "Instead of going after Medicare," Buchanan told New Hampshire factory workers, "we ought to start dealing with foreign aid, end those \$50 billion bailouts, start dealing with the World Bank loan guarantees." He explained to Tom Carson that "I think government can fairly be used" to restructure tax incentives and penalties to discourage businesses from moving their operations overseas. Buchanan's antistatism is genuine, but it rightly focuses on dismantling the present state as the present Ruling Class has constructed it; he does not purport to be an anarchist who imagines the state is an unnecessary and unmitigated evil, and "anarcho-libertarians" drawn to his America First foreign policy need to understand that Richard Nixon's former speechwriter would have no hesitation in making full use of the constitutionally legitimate powers of the federal government. They also need to understand that reducing the leviathan to its constitutionally legitimate powers would not excite any but their most eccentric phobias of statism.

Neither the antistatist right nor cultural conservatives have any good reason to be uncomfortable with the new identity Buchanan is building, though Economic Men like Kemp and Gramm and neoconservative apologists for the federal leviathan have plenty of reason to resist him and the new political horse he is saddling. If the antistatists bridle at his protectionism, they will at least get the satisfaction of replacing much of the current tax structure of the state with tariffs, and the Old Right has long recognized that cultural and moral destruction is in large part driven by the swollen state and the powers of social management it has usurped in education, the arts, and the imperial federal judiciary. Buchanan explicitly vows to disman-

tle these parts of the leviathan, and given the Middle American social structure that today must underlie any serious political resistance to the federal megastate and the Ruling Class it supports, the Old Right has no practical alternative anyway.

Yet, if Buchanan has one major flaw as a spokesman for and an architect of the new Middle American political identity that transcends and synthesizes both left and right, it is that he exhibits a proclivity to draw back from the implications of his own radicalism. This became evident in 1992, when he insisted on endorsing George Bush and even on campaigning for him, and last year he also vowed to support the Republican ticket even if he was not the nominee. Any such commitment on Buchanan's part should be contingent on other candidates' commitment to support him if he is nominated, but so far none has bothered to do so. Buchanan, for all the radicalism of his ideas and campaign, remains deeply wedded to the Republican Party and to a conservative political label, and he tends to greet criticism of his deviations from conservative orthodoxy with affirmations of doctrine. Last year, as conservative criticism of him increased, his response was that "the only area of disagreement I have [with traditional conservatives] is trade, and that's crucial to bringing back the Perot voters" to the Republican Party.

Buchanan's loyalty to the GOP is touching, especially since almost no Republican leader or conservative pundit has much good to say about him, and the loudest mouths for the "Big Tent" are always the first to try to push him out of it. Even today, many Republicans try to blame the 1992 defeat of George Bush's inept and lackluster bid for reelection on Buchanan's now-famous speech at the Houston convention, a speech that was the only memorable event of the whole proceeding and which Buchanan himself continues to defend and even to distribute as literature for his present campaign. But, touching or not, Buchanan's refusal to break even more definitely with a conventional conservative identity and with a Republican Party whose leadership fears and despises him, his beliefs, and his followers is a serious error. I recall in late 1991, in the aftermath of a wall-to-wall gathering at his home to discuss his coming campaign, I told him privately that he would be better off without all the hangers-on, direct-mail artists, fund-raising whiz kids, marketing and PR czars, and the rest of the crew that today constitutes the backbone of all that remains of the famous "Conservative Movement" and who never fail to show up on the campaign doorstep to guzzle someone else's liquor and pocket other people's money. "These people are defunct," I told him. "You don't need them, and you're better off without them. Go to New Hampshire and call yourself a patriot, a nationalist, an America Firster, but don't even use the word 'conservative.' It doesn't mean anything any more."

Pat listened, but I can't say he took my advice. By making his bed with the Republicans, then and today, he opens himself to charges that he's not a "true" party man or a "true" conservative, constrains his chances for victory by the need to massage trunk-waving Republicans whose highest goal is to win elections, and only dilutes and deflects the radicalism of the message he and his Middle American Revolution have to offer. The sooner we hear that message loudly and clearly, without distractions from Conservatism, Inc., the Stupid Party, and their managerial elite, the sooner Middle America will be able to speak with an authentic and united voice, and the sooner we can get on with conserving the nation from the powers that are destroying it.

LIBERAL ARTS

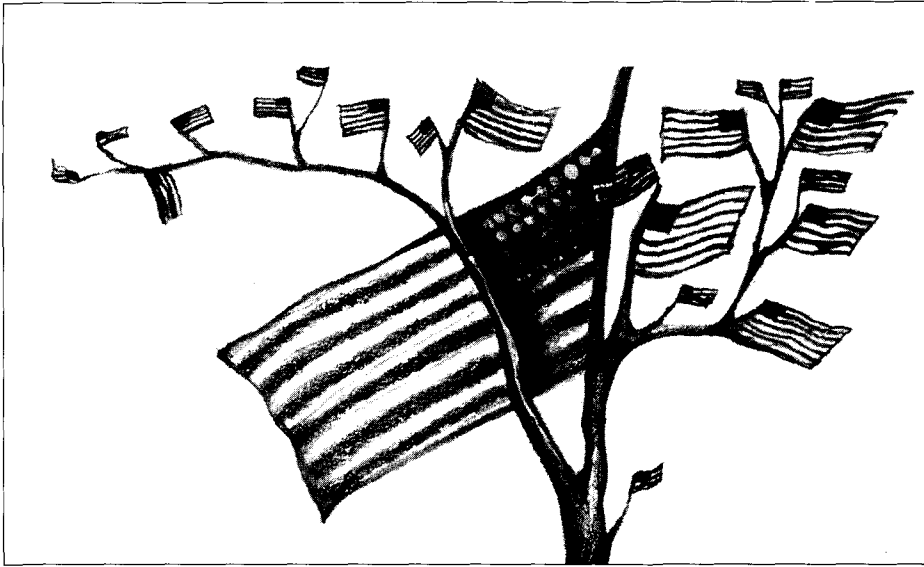
THE CROSS OF GOLD

"We do not come as aggressors. Our war is not a war of conquest; we are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families, and posterity. We have petitioned, and our petitions have been scorned; we have entreated, and our entreaties have been disregarded; we have begged, and they have mocked when our calamity came. We beg no longer; we entreat no more; we petition no more. We defy them."

—William Jennings Bryan, 1896

Who Can We Shoot?

by Bill Kauffman



Who better to kick off a discussion of American populism than Henry James? In *The Portrait of a Lady* Sockless Hank had Henrietta Stackpole define a “cosmopolite”: “That means he’s a little of everything and not much of any. I must say I think patriotism is like charity—it begins at home.” Likewise, a healthy populism must be grounded in a love of the particular, or else it is just a grab bag of (mostly valid) resentments.

James understood the consequence of the Spanish-American War to be “remote colonies run by bosses”; expansion diluted true patriotism and would “demoralize us.” His diagnosis is still sound, though the American people are now cast in the role of the Filipinos. The alliances and friendships concreting as the American Empire staggers through caducity and hastens, one hopes, to a long-overdue demise are every bit as refreshingly meet as those spawned in the depths of Manila Bay: a backwoods hippie wearing a “Buchanan ’96” button is descended from the sturdily Republican poet-editor Thomas Bailey Aldrich, who announced in 1899 that he would not “vote for McKinley again. I would sooner vote for Bryan. To be ruined financially is not so bad as to be ruined morally.”

The dire predictions of the anti-imperialists came to pass: gentlemen such as James and Aldrich were no match for Teddy Roosevelt. A century later Newt Gingrich, TR’s biggest fan, haunts our demoralized land. Gingrich may never have bagged an elk, but he is much like his heroes, the cousins Roosevelt and Harry Truman: a picked-on kid raised on war games who probably can’t throw a baseball as far as Olive Chancellor could.

When asked about his provenance by a fellow graduate student, Gingrich replied, “I’m from nowhere.” So were most of the blustery swindlers who disgraced the populist label while rising to prominence in the 1970’s and 80’s. They are the gas-

conading “populists” of the right who operate out of Northern Virginia post office boxes: Big Bad Foes of the New World Order who dwell in sprawling apartment complexes and could not name a neighbor if their lives depended on it. Anticommunist and pro-nothing, they cozened money out of credulous TV addicts for Ollie North and before him Jonas Savimbi—one of them dreamt of nominating his ebon god for President in 1988, if only that xenophobic native birth clause in the Constitution had not disqualified the Angolan. Today they trumpet “family values” from the mountain tops of junk mail, while down below in Chevy Chase their neglected children enter Riot Grrrl suicide pacts.

The populist “left” of the Dark Age was no better: it consisted of a few earnest student council presidents trudging door to door in strange neighborhoods gathering petition signatures to save the whales or the ozone layer, anything so long as it had nothing to do with the workaday lives of the lunkheaded proles who answered the doorbell.

But as Newt himself might crow, it’s the beginning of a new age, and vascular American populism is resurgent. You can tell because *Newsweek* and that hoary and reliable enemy of the Old Republic, the *New Republic*, portentously invoke Richard Hofstadter’s hilarious *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*—which ascribed all dissent from the Cold War Vital Center consensus to mental illness—and Alan Brinkley (Hofstadter born to a TV star) is trotted out to explain, like the girl in the Lou Reed song, why “down to you is up,” and why anything smacking of popular rage is not really populism.

They want populism to be Rush Limbaugh and Common Cause, and I am very sorry to indulge in hate speech, but we are talking Daniel Shays and the Loco Focos and Tom Watson and Huey Long and their swelling band of offspring who are gathering under the Tree of Liberty. (If you can’t beat ’em, co-opt ’em. How the corporate media clamored for an independent

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I should like to see, instead of
an America First Party, a
cluster of 75 or 180 smaller entities:
a West Kansas First Party, a Rhode
Island First Party, a Southern
Oregon First Party, and so on,
representing every nook and
cranny of all 48 states.

The post-Cold War populists—who are largely isolationist, decentralist, libertarian, ticked-off but sweetly naive in a Frank Capra way—know that the enemy is not a Nicaraguan Marxist or a Compton rapper but a regime represented by the likes of William Bennett and Robert Rubin. We will not find succor in the Democracy—the party that effaced all regional distinctions in constructing our national security state—and as for the Republicans, can anyone name a single instance when Wall Street and Main Street lined up on opposite sides of an important issue and the GOP sided with Main Street? Don't two words—Wendell Willkie—say all that need ever be said about who owns the party of Reconstruction, TR, and the Gulf War?

Our forefather, William Jennings Bryan, had the varmint in his sight in a speech at Springfield, Ohio, in the summer of 1896: "My friends, remember that relief cannot come to you from those who have fastened this yoke upon you. You may go to New York or Boston and find financiers . . . that know more about Europe than they do about the United States. They go oftener to London than to the great prairies of the West and South. If because of their more intimate acquaintance with foreigners they have exaggerated ideas of the necessity for foreign aid, you people who live between the Alleghenies and the Golden Gate—you who are willing to trust your all upon the Republic and rise or fall with it—you have the power and the right to take the reins of government into your own hands and administer the law, not for foreign syndicates, but for the people of the United States."

The Wise Men who buried the republic were the children of those financiers. The fathers—robber barons and Wall Street sharks—shipped the sons from the hearthstone to exclusive boarding schools, where they spent their youths playing that epitome of boring internationalism, soccer, and learning a code of conduct which evidently countenanced the mass slaughter of one's countrymen in illegal wars, as long as the statesmen responsible knew which is the salad fork. The very best products

of the prep schools became the patrician radicals who are among the greatest American independents (and the palladia of American independence), but for every Edmund Wilson at the Hill School there were fourscore Harrimans at Groton, boys stripped of attachments to particular American places or ancestors or anything beyond the plunderbund.

They came to form a deracinated ruling class which entangled us in the most quotidian affairs of Europe because London and Paris were, to them, closer than Abilene or Green Bay. There's nothing very jolly about what Skull and Bones did to my country, Roger.

Yet to oppose them—to say that Henry Stimson and Dean Acheson and their epigoni, George Bush and Strobe Talbott, are traitors who subverted an America of which they know nothing—is so far outside the pale of acceptable speech that merely to make the observation is to invite the cavedropping of the ironically named Louis Frech. (Who'd have guessed that the first client of the Empowerment Agenda would be the FBI?)

Again, I summon the shade of Bryan, "that Heaven-born Bryan/That Homer Bryan, who sang from the West," as Vachel Lindsay cried. In a campaign speech at Milwaukee, he said:

I want to call your attention to what some one has said about the influence of foreign nations and foreign personages in the affairs of our nation: 'Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow citizens), the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.' There is the language which I desire to press upon your memories. It is not my language. Whose language do you suppose it is? What man, 'trying to stir up the passions of our people against foreigners'; what demagogue 'appealing to the mob to justify his course'; what anarchist do you suppose used those words? Those are the words of George Washington. . . . If it was true then, it is true now. My friends, I warn you against entrusting the destinies of this nation to legislative bodies which are beyond your control."

Note that Bryan did not say "beyond your ken" or "beyond your power of recognition" but "beyond your control." As Alexander Cockburn recently pointed out in the *Nation*, populists are fools to huff and puff at chimerical shadows (Jewish bankers! The Illuminati!) when the villains are hiding in plain sight.

Their creed was uttered a century and a half ago by Daniel Webster, who said, "There are no Alleghenies in my politics." This was a fib—the only time Webster lived down to this motto was in his disgraceful promotion of the Compromise of 1850, when he abjured New England interests and forced a hated Fugitive Slave Act on his people. But the ignoble sentiment underlying Webster's aphorism is shared by every knave and commissar of the New World Order (no matter if wifey collects folk art).

We are too versicolored a country to be embraced by a single American populism: our politics must be filled with Alleghenies. (Those who in 1864 called themselves the Union Party sustained a brutal military occupation of their Southern brothers for another dozen years.) While patriots to-day share common foes—the whole *New York Times-Heritage*

Foundation Vile Center—I should like to see, instead of an America First Party, a cluster of 75 or 180 smaller entities: a West Kansas First Party, a Rhode Island First Party, a Southern Oregon First Party, and so on, representing every nook and cranny of all 48 states. I say 48 because the revolution's got to start somewhere, so at our house we fly a 48-star flag, honoring the contiguous United States, not those grating pretenders Alaska and Hawaii, rotten fruits of empire given statehood in that burst of insanity known as the Cold War.

The most thoughtful opponents of stitching the 49th and 50th stars on the flag were Senator John Stennis, the courtly Mississippian, and Senator J. William Fulbright, the Confederate anti-imperialist. In the Alaska statehood debate, Stennis asked if, after admitting this frozen expanse to the Union, we would then have to “admit Hawaii? And then are we going to admit the Virgin Islands? Are we going to admit Puerto Rico? Are we going to admit Guam? Okinawa?” (In time, Senator, in time.) Stennis wondered “whether we shall take a disconnected area, whether it be in the Pacific, in South America, in Africa, or anywhere else . . . in the bosom of our nation? We are changing the pattern of our Union once we launch out on this program.” And so Old Glory was defaced by the cosmopolites.

But lo and behold, a lively native nationalist movement has arisen in Hawaii (members identified by “Kingdom of Hawaii” license plates), and the crustier Alaskans have long favored secession, so to the dispossessed sons of Queen Liliuokalani and in atonement for my rapacious landsman William Seward I recommend the policy laid out by the New Zealand band Midnight Oil in its song about Maori land claims:

The time has come
A fact's a fact
It belongs to them
Let's give it back

And in what has become a hackneyed phrase—but one that can never really lose its tang—let's take back our own country.

There is a famous scene in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* in which a tenant farmer confronts the man evicting him from his shack:

“It's mine. I built it. You bump it down—I'll be in the window with a rifle. You even come too close and I'll pot you like a rabbit.”

“It's not me. There's nothing I can do. I'll lose my job if I don't do it. And look—suppose you kill me? They'll just hang you, but long before you're hung there'll be another guy on the tractor, and he'll bump the house down. You're not killing the right guy.”

“That's so,” the tenant said. “Who gave you orders? I'll go after him. He's the one to kill.”

“You're wrong. He got his orders from the bank. The bank told him, ‘Clear those people out or it's your job.’”

“Well, there's a president of the bank. There's a board of directors. I'll fill up the magazine of the rifle and go into the bank.”

The driver said, “Fellow was telling me the bank gets orders from the East. The orders were, ‘Make the land show profit or we'll close you up.’”

“But where does it stop? Who can we shoot? I don't aim to starve to death before I kill the man that's

starving me.”

We are not starvelings, and we know whom to shoot. (Figuratively speaking, of course—we should obey the example of Saint Dorothy Day and leave murder as an instrument of policy to the United States government.)

The new American populism has 1,000 offshoots, but a Southern League partisan in Alabama and an anti-nuclear dump activist in Allegany County, New York, are comrades in the nascent movement that is opposed, as Jerry Brown said in *Chronicles* (November 1994), to “a global focus over which we have virtually no control. . . . We have to force larger institutions to operate in the interest of local autonomy and local power. . . . Localism, if you really take it seriously, is going to interrupt certain patterns of modern growth and globalism.”

Plenty of us do take localism seriously, not in its denatured form (block grants! expedited HHS waivers! hoo boy!) but in the way our fathers understood it, which is to say the octopus must be slain, starting with its most dangerous tentacles (abolish the FBI and CIA, slash the war budget, strip absentee owners of TV and radio licenses, and then in the second hour . . .). This train may not be bound for glory, but at least we're not going to Pyongyang or Port-au-Prince or Kuwait City.

What began with Henry James shall end with Pete Townshend. Hey you patriots of all bloodlines, you Tacoma sons of Wobblies and Nebraska sons of Grangers and Tuskegee sons of Washington and Chicago daughters of America Firsters: let's get together before we get much older. c

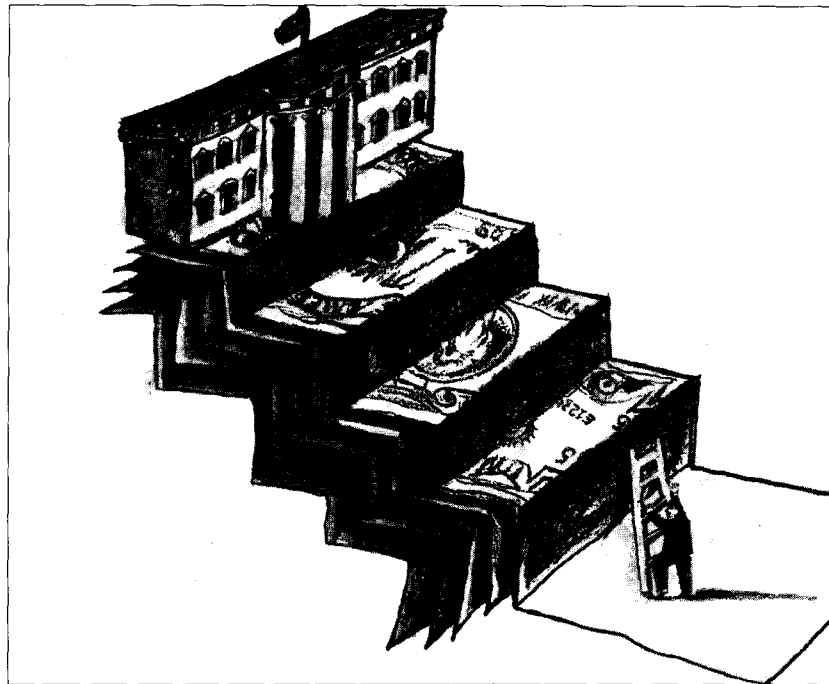
Driving in Winter

by Hayden Head

Times are hard—hard like falling ice tapping
On my hood and windshield. The broken bits
Constitute an awkward arced mosaic,
Like San Vitale drained of green and gold
And life. Like winter. The blades are trapping
Constellated tesserae, and each fits
Compacted in an angle. Archaic
It seems to dream of times before this cold . . .
Belisarius sails with flags flapping,
Out of the east where Justinian sits
Codifying laws in tomes prosaic,
His image fixed by God knows who of old . . .
But random patterns of ice on machines
Suggest that, yes, we might return to dreams.

Campaign Finance Reform

by Jack J. Tawil



In accepting the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1908, this century's greatest populist warned: "How can the people hope to rule if they are not able to learn, until after the election, what the predatory interests are doing?" The man was, of course, William Jennings Bryan, and he offered a "complete and effective" solution to the financing of political campaigns: a ban on contributions from corporations, a cap of \$10,000 on individual contributions, and public disclosure of all contributions prior to an election.

Current law falls well short of Mr. Bryan's prescription, and the issue still commands substantial populist support, not least among Ross Perot's followers. Yet financial abuses in political campaigns predate the Republic itself, at least by the yardstick of current standards. Had Common Cause, the clean campaign lobby, been around at the time, they surely would have admonished George Washington about his 1758 campaign for a seat in the Virginia House of Burgesses. At an election day event, Washington served up 46 gallons of beer, 34 gallons of wine, 28 gallons of rum, 50 gallons of rum punch, and two gallons of cider royal. Considering there were just 391 voters in his district, his expenditure per voter was at least comparable to Michael Huffington's nearly \$30 million campaign for the Senate in 1994. Nor would Common Cause have been pleased with Abraham Lincoln's *secret* \$400 purchase in 1860 of a German-American newspaper to ensure favorable reporting of the Republican Party both in English and in German.

The brief history of campaign finance reform that follows shows how legislative action has attempted—and largely

failed—to address the problems arising from the financing of political campaigns. It is a history that highlights the difficulty in legislating politically acceptable solutions that do not jeopardize our constitutional guarantees of free speech.

Public attitudes toward political campaigns have clearly changed since the Republic's founding. During the nation's early years, the economy was primarily agrarian, and there were no large corporations capable of corrupting the political process. Moreover, the minuscule fraction of the nation's resources controlled by Congress did not enable politicians to channel wealth to favored individuals and businesses. Congress, during this period, also kept within the bounds of the Constitution—especially a narrowly interpreted Commerce Clause, and the Ninth and Tenth Amendments, which grant all rights not enumerated in the Constitution to the states and to the people. Finally, because Congress was convened for only a few months out of the year, members had less time to make mischief.

Not only has the scope of government increased over the years, but the ambitions and tenure of legislators have changed as well. In the early years of the Republic, those holding national office were primarily merchants and gentleman farmers. They came to serve their nation for a few years and then returned to private life. Not only did they rely on their own financial resources for their political campaigns, but they also were expected to bear many of the expenses associated with holding office. This burden could be substantial. Thomas Jefferson, who inherited extensive landholdings, was nearly insolvent by the end of his second term.

By the early 19th century, the professional politician had emerged. Not men of wealth, they sought outside resources to fund their campaigns. This need for recurring financial sup-

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port provided the foundation for political parties. This, in turn, led to the development of a system of political spoils. Under this system, a large number of federal patronage positions were established, and the beneficiaries of these positions were required to "donate" a percentage of their wages to the party in power. These mandatory contributions were outlawed in 1867.

Although the growth of the railroads, the banks, and the oil companies in the early 1800's produced wealthy individuals with national political ties, these titans were relatively few, and their political dealings were usually kept well-concealed from the general public. If reform was needed to curtail these influences during the nation's first century, the public was not generally aware of it.

At the beginning of the 20th century, commercial interests had become increasingly important to the nation's economy, and businessmen sought access to national officeholders. Because the number of businessmen seeking access grew much faster than the number of officeholders, access became more difficult to acquire. As in most other markets where price becomes the primary mechanism for allocating scarce goods, political contributions naturally emerged as the way to allocate access within the legislative marketplace.

The second cause of changing campaign standards is a result of the expanding scope of the federal government. Although federal budgets did not begin to balloon until the onset of the New Deal, legislators had the power to confer great wealth on corporations and their owners through the legislative process.

Until after the 1904 election of Theodore Roosevelt, the public was largely ignorant of the magnitude of corporate giving to national candidates. At hearings held by a special committee formed by the New York state legislature after the election, it was disclosed that both parties had solicited and received large contributions from major corporations and financial organizations. A public outcry ensued, causing President Roosevelt to request in December 1905 that all campaign contributions from corporations and banks be outlawed. After considerable maneuvering, a bill to this effect was passed by Congress in 1907, which Roosevelt signed into law. Meanwhile, public revelation of these business contributions had dampened any inclination the administration might have had to show favor to its major contributors. In the words of one contributor, steel magnate Henry C. Frick, partner of Andrew Carnegie, "Roosevelt got down on his knees to us. We bought the son of a bitch and he did not stay bought."

In 1910, legislation was enacted that required organizations operating in two or more states to report their political contributions. Reporting requirements were also imposed on individuals. But a provision for preelection reporting was deleted prior to passage, thereby denying voters knowledge of questionable activities until after an election. Thus, voters would be forced to wait until the next election to exact retribution.

Two additional laws also affected campaign financing. When the 16th Amendment instituted the national income tax in 1913, it opened a floodgate of opportunity for congressmen to use and abuse tax laws to stimulate contributions from affected business interests. And as campaign costs escalated, so, it seems, did the number of businesses affected by changes in the tax laws. The other law, passed in 1911, clamped down on political committees influencing senatorial candidates. This legislation also imposed reporting requirements both on political organizations and the individual candidates for congressional office, and it placed a ceiling on the amount candi-

dates could spend in primaries and elections. Whether Congress in fact had the power to regulate primaries was a matter of intense debate—the Constitution makes no direct mention of primaries—especially in the South, where the outcome of the primary virtually determined the outcome. The Supreme Court declined to resolve this issue in 1921, in *Newberry v. U.S.*

The Federal Corrupt Practices Act of 1925, the next major reform of campaign laws, was propelled through Congress in reaction to the Teapot Dome scandal, in which President Warren G. Harding's Interior Secretary had received kickbacks from a company whose contributions to the GOP had helped retire the party's campaign debt. The Corrupt Practices Act overhauled existing law, but primaries were removed from its scope. A provision was added to require disclosure of contributions not made during an election year—a loophole that had facilitated the Teapot Dome scandal.

Still, federal election law was easy to sidestep. Limitations on campaign expenditures applied only to spending made with the "knowledge of consent" of the candidate. In addition, political committees operating solely within a single state escaped the grasp of the law. It was thus easy to shield candidates from knowing about campaign expenditures, or to devise ways to channel contributions to single-state committees.

The limitations on contributions were circumvented by giving the maximum amount to each of numerous committees working on behalf of a favored candidate, and corporations would legalize their large contributions by distributing them first as "bonuses" to their managers. Labor unions could collect contributions, other than dues, from their members for candidates and could deploy treasury funds for get-out-the-vote activities. Finally, existing law included no provisions for reviewing or publishing disclosure reports to correct errors or omissions, thereby diminishing the effectiveness of disclosure. To make matters worse, though it remained easy to circumvent existing campaign laws, even the punishable offenses that did come to light were studiously overlooked.

A part from the 1939 Hatch Act, which prohibited overt political activity by federal employees, significant campaign reform had to wait until 1971. In that year, the Federal Election Campaign Act was passed to address the weakness of existing campaign reform laws. The FECA and its 1974 amendments represented the most comprehensive effort at campaign finance reform and remains the basis for current law.

The 1971 act imposed limitations on individual contributions. All political committees active in any federal campaign, including those operating within a single state and receiving or spending in excess of \$1,000, were subject to reporting requirements. Donations above \$100 to individual candidates and to committees had to be disclosed. Overall limitations also were imposed on each candidate's media expenditures. These limitations applied separately to primary and general elections.

To encourage more widespread public participation in election campaigns, Congress also enacted the Revenue Act of 1971. This law gave taxpayers the option of earmarking \$1 of their federal income taxes for the public funding of presidential elections. Under this act, presidential candidates who met minimum qualifications and who agreed to observe overall campaign expenditure limits would receive matching funds.

The 1974 amendments to FECA followed the Watergate revelations about campaign law abuses. These amendments

substantially enhanced the 1971 act by reinstating overall ceilings on each candidate's campaign expenditures, by imposing strict new contribution regulations, and by strengthening disclosure requirements. The amendments also encouraged contributions from political action committees (PACs) by repealing the Hatch Act provisions prohibiting unions and corporations with federal contracts from creating PACs.

These strict provisions brought together opponents from both ends of the political spectrum, including Senator James L. Buckley, elected as a Conservative Party candidate from New York, Democratic Senator Eugene J. McCarthy, and the New York Civil Liberties Union. Their challenge reached the Supreme Court, and in 1976, in *Buckley v. Valeo*, the Court ruled large sections of the law unconstitutional. While validating the ceilings on contributions to candidates and political committees and the disclosure requirements, the Court overturned on First Amendment grounds the overall campaign spending limits, the spending limits imposed on a candidate's personal funds, and all limits on contributions to and spending by individuals and organizations who act independently of candidates. While *Buckley* prevented the shredding of the First Amendment, it left campaign finance reform much weakened. Congress responded to *Buckley* by passing amendments in 1976, but these did little to revitalize the reform laws.

More recent attempts at campaign finance reform have been unsuccessful. Indeed, this is the most difficult legislation to enact because it strikes at the very heart of partisan politics. Overwhelming any arguments on the merits of reform is the lawmakers' fear of giving any challenger or the opposite party a political advantage. Because existing campaign finance laws strongly favor incumbents, it usually takes a major political scandal to cause lawmakers to fear their constituents enough to enact meaningful campaign reform.

The chief problem associated with the unregulated flow of money in political campaigns is how such funds could influence (or appear to influence) legislation. But there are additional problems as well. Tax bills and other legislation may be altered not only in response to contributions, but also to stimulate contributions. Legislators have a clear understanding that the power to tax is the power to destroy.

There is also the issue of access. While special interests vigorously deny that their contributions give them undue influence over legislators, they do acknowledge that they receive special access to the legislative process. However, this, too, is not without ethical difficulty. Most Americans would contend that the political system should be equally accessible to all. While this may not be possible in practice, the common view is that money should not be the key to a congressman's door.

Another problem concerns the advantages of incumbency. These advantages include the franking privilege, name recognition, free publicity from the media, and the opportunity to campaign while traveling on official business. But perhaps the greatest advantage is the ability of incumbents—and especially members of the party in power—to attract campaign contributions from special interests, while their challengers are left to beg for the crumbs. Finally, many people view as excessive the total resources expended on electing people to national office.

Most proposals to reform campaign financing draw on the following concepts: limitations on the size of political contributions, ceilings on campaign expenditures, public disclosure, and public funding. The first of these, dollar limitations on contributions, is aimed at reducing the potential for buying influence

or access. Ceilings on campaign expenditures, if sufficiently stringent, are designed to limit the necessity of raising large amounts of money, but they also provide another way to monitor campaign receipts, since receipts must equal expenditures plus campaign debt. Requiring public disclosure of contributions relies on the theory that candidates avoid transactions that cannot stand public scrutiny. Finally, public funding is designed to replace private funding and the various problems associated with it.

But each of these elements has its problems. The First Amendment prevents any limitation on contributions to organizations that are not directly controlled by the candidate. Also, funding used for "nonpartisan" activities, such as get-out-the-vote drives, is usually exempt; thus, loads of "soft money" are often available to partisan groups for getting out the vote of *their* people. The First Amendment also poses an effective barrier to legislated ceilings on campaign expenditures, unless the ceilings are voluntary, in which case they must be made sufficiently attractive by inducing candidates with such things as matching public funds, as in our presidential elections. However, the popularity of public funding appears to be waning. It seems unlikely that the current funding mechanism—the income tax checkoff—could provide sufficient public funds for both presidential and congressional campaigns. Moreover, even with matching funds, candidates still need to solicit contributions from individuals and businesses. Finally, public disclosure, while apparently effective in preventing the worst abuses, has not been a sufficiently powerful deterrent to eliminate at least the appearance of buying influence.

A recent innovation in campaign finance reform is a proposal by Representative Linda Smith (R-Washington) to require a large proportion of a candidate's campaign funds to originate within the candidate's district. This could restrict the ability of corporations and other special interests operating outside of the candidate's district from influencing the process. Of particular significance is the potential of this provision to limit sharply the flow of money to the powerful chairmen of major congressional committees. However, it is not clear whether this proposal could withstand First Amendment scrutiny.

I would like to offer an alternative solution that, ironically, is based on *nondisclosure* of contributions and allows unlimited campaign contributions and unlimited expenditures. Its potential for success rests on a single principle and on two assumptions. The principle is this: *If officeholders cannot identify their contributors, then their legislative actions cannot be influenced by them.* The device for putting this principle into effect is a financial institution that receives campaign contributions on behalf of candidates, but which erects a firewall between the contributions and the individual campaign expenditure accounts, which the institution creates for the candidates. This firewall is constructed to prevent candidates from knowing the names of their contributors as well as the individual amounts of the contributions.

Two assumptions must hold for this reform measure to be effective. The first is that voters will reject candidates who do not receive all of their campaign contributions from our special financial institution, which we'll simply call the Bank; and the second is that candidates will deem it in their interest to receive all of their campaign contributions through the Bank. If the first assumption is valid, the second is likely to be valid as well.

The primary function of the Bank is to accept campaign

contributions on behalf of specific candidates and to credit their campaign accounts for the amount of the contribution. The firewall is similar to a blind trust and is constructed so that for any single contribution no person, other than the contributor, knows with certainty both the name of the contributor and the name of the recipient.

One way of producing the firewall is with a special "contribution kit." The kit would consist of a pair of attached envelopes. Each of the two envelopes would have imprinted on the outside the same unique bar-coded serial number. Also printed on the outside of each envelope would be the letter "R" (for Republican), "D" (for Democrat), or "O" (for other).

The first envelope would have an outside flap on which the contributor would record only the name of the recipient; in particular, neither the contributor's name nor the amount of the contribution would be recorded. (This envelope could be constructed similarly to those supplied by credit card companies, which use the envelope flap to sell merchandise.) After filling in the recipient's name, the contributor would seal the form inside the envelope.

In the second envelope, the contributor would enclose a check in the amount of the contribution, but made out to the Bank. The contributor's name could appear on the check, or on a separate form. This envelope would then be sealed, and would contain nothing that could identify the recipient. Indeed, a check received with the recipient's name on it would be returned to the contributor.

The envelopes, still attached to each other, would be mailed or otherwise delivered to the Bank. Upon arrival, each envelope pair would be separated by a Bank employee. The serial number would be scanned into a computer. Then the envelope containing the donation would be opened and the amount of the contribution entered into the computer. Finally, a receipt would be prepared and mailed to the contributor. At the end of the day, the contribution would be deposited into the Bank's general account.

The same employee would route the second sealed envelope, containing the name of the recipient, to Section R, D, or O, depending on the letter stamped on the outside of the envelope. Envelopes route to Section R, for example, would be opened by a different bank employee, who would scan the envelope's serial number into a computer and enter the recipient's name. A party functionary could be present to witness this operation to ensure that the unknown contribution from the unknown contributor is credited to the correct candidate. At the end of the day, after checking deposits and account credits had been reconciled, all envelopes would be shredded, and the forms themselves could be shredded, or stored in a secure area.

At this point in the process, besides the contributor, only the computer "knows" the name of the recipient in addition to the name of the contributor or the dollar amount of his contribution. The contributor is able to prove only that he has made a given contribution to the Bank—he has a receipt to this effect. He cannot prove he made a given contribution to any particular candidate or party. Of course, he can *claim* to have made a contribution to a specific candidate, but so could anyone else with a receipt from the Bank.

Indeed, specious claims should be encouraged. Legitimate contributors may well attempt to inform the recipients of their contributions. However, the less certain the recipient can be of the contributor's claim, the less likely he is to be influenced by

it. Consequently, an abundance of specious claims will have the effect of debasing all claims generally.

A few housekeeping rules are needed to minimize cheating. To prevent contributors from "marking" their contributions by donating an "odd" amount (such as \$16,666.66), contributions would be accepted only in five-dollar multiples. More importantly, to prevent identification because a contribution is unusually large, a provision could be imposed whereby no single contribution could comprise more than, say, 20 percent of a candidate's total receipts in any given accounting period. Contributions in excess of 20 percent of total receipts would be carried over automatically into the next accounting period, and the 20 percent restriction again applied.

At the end of each accounting period, each candidate would receive a report showing his account balance, but this report, which would be publicly available, would list neither the names of the donors nor the amounts of individual contributions. Candidates would be free to spend all positive balances in their accounts on their campaigns.

This proposal offers a free-market solution to the problems raised by campaign contributions and political influence.

To deter a contributor from simply handing to the candidate the attached envelopes with a check enclosed—for the candidate himself to seal and mail—we would modify the process for contributions exceeding, say, \$100. (It is doubtful that a politician can be "bought" for less than \$100.) For these larger contributions, rather than specifying the name of the recipient in the second envelope, the contributor would report his own name, telephone number, and perhaps an identifying code word. An employee of the Bank would then telephone the contributor to obtain the recipient's name. An electronic menu system would allow the contributor to use his telephone to key in the name of the recipient after entering his code word.

Is the firewall totally effective? No. Just as current campaign finance law as well as proposed laws could not prevent an individual from slipping a suitcase full of cash to a candidate, the current proposal also could not prevent this. While I have indicated that no new legislation would be needed to implement this proposal, legislation to require the reporting of all campaign expenditures could expose those cases in which campaign expenditures exceeded a candidate's total receipts from the Bank, plus the campaign's accounts payable, plus expenditures from the candidate's personal resources. Such cases would strongly suggest that the candidate had received contributions that circumvented the Bank, and the threat of public disclosure of this information by the Bank to voters would be a deterrent.

Lastly, I wonder whether there remains any reason for making a contribution directly to the candidate rather than through the Bank. The reasons for making such contributions are: to influence legislation, to gain privileged access to the officeholder, to gain privileged access to information, to thank a legislator for supporting or promoting a particular piece of legislation, and to support a candidate whose past, present, or future actions or beliefs are deemed desirable. The first three reasons have as their aim increasing the likelihood of receiving something of value in exchange for the contribution. Contributions motivated by these three reasons are therefore to be minimized. Contributions for the last two reasons can be accomplished just as effectively through the Bank, and by going through the Bank the contributions are effectively *cleansed*.

Civil libertarians should be heartened by this proposal because it impinges in no way on the First Amendment. Individuals and businesses become free to contribute unlimited amounts of money to support candidates of their choosing as long as their contributions are funneled through the Bank.

Could such a proposal be implemented? Quite easily, it would seem. All it would take is a financial institution willing to set up the machinery for the Bank, and political candidates who believe they can gain a competitive edge on their rival can-

didates by renouncing all direct campaign contributions. The marketplace would then assert its judgment.

This proposal offers a free-market solution to the problems raised by campaign contributions and political influence. The Federal Elections Commission could be abolished, or reemerge as a mere shadow of its former self, enforcing only the reporting requirements on campaign expenditures. The campaign finance reform laws now on the books could be scrapped, along with the existing machinery for collecting and distributing funds to presidential candidates. Campaign restrictions on the candidates themselves would certainly become less onerous.

Finally, I would expect an increase in the proportion of total campaign contributions received by challengers versus incumbents, because contributions would now be driven largely by preferences for candidates, rather than by access to the system. And because influence, privileged access, and privileged information would no longer be for sale, I would expect a reduction in overall campaign contributions and campaign spending, a decrease in the proportion of total campaign contributions received by the party in control of the House and the Senate—and especially among committee chairmen—and a reduction in the manipulation of legislation, especially tax legislation, for the purpose of eliciting contributions.

Priam's Sons

by Hayden Head

Priam's fifty sinewed sons,
His woven rope of boys,
Were twisted in a cable strong
Enough to tow to Troy
A thousand Grecian ships or more,
To fertile, headstrong Troy.

Those fifty strands of DNA
(That one man could supply them!)
Were woven helixlike to tow
The lineage of old Priam
Into the evanescent dawn
Of ever nascent scions.

We saw what Neoptolemus
Did to Priam's cable:
He hacked the strands in gleeful rage,
According to the fable,
'Til he tore through the courtyard wall
And smeared with gore the lares,
Then sacrificed the old man's life
To ever hungry Ares.

Our reflections might be guided thus:

Aeneas had Ascanius,
His only son, yet he was pleased
To see his seed like thirsty bees
Upon the riverbank in hell
Where Anchises dwelled.

Odysseus had Telemachus,
His only son, and he was just
In ruling rascal Ithaka.
When the old man, mythical
And legendary, had to go—
Odysseus knew his son could string his bow.

Abraham had only Isaac,
Whose end, it's true, was almost tragic,
But God revoked his odd demand,
And Abraham had seed like sand.

Even God, at whose command
Whole worlds arise, had but one strand,
An only son, a broken thread,
Unloved, unheeded, and unwed.
Rewoven at the resurrection,
He pulled the world to God's perfection.

The Populist Rainbow

Black Nationalists and the Militia Movement

by Jesse Walker



It is June 1994, and Anthony Hilder is attending a Southern California gathering called “The New World Order.” Two overhead projectors beam book-covers alleging Masonic conspiracies onto the walls. Hilder, white and middle-aged, is the host of two syndicated talk-radio shows, *Radio Free America* and *Radio Free World*. He has brought tapes to sell to other attendees, and is doing a brisk business; quite a few people have wandered through the smoke-filled room to peruse and purchase his wares.

Many might assume Hilder and his customers to be racists. They will be surprised to discover that the event was a multiracial rap/rock concert in downtown Los Angeles, featuring Ice T, Body Count, Fishbone, and Ice Cube, among others; that the gathering was organized not by a white man donned in camouflage, but by a black record producer who calls himself Afrika Islam; that the smoke thickening the air was not burning tobacco, but burning marijuana.

The popular stereotype of the militia movement does not leave much room for cultural diversity. The media have had to acknowledge one prominent African-American militiaman—James Johnson of inner-city Columbus, Ohio—if only because of his high profile in the movement. But he is treated as an aberration—or, worse yet, a token. More common are hysterical quotations from representatives of the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center, both of which have accused the militia movement of fomenting bigotry.

Jesse Walker is the assistant editor of *Liberty* magazine.

Their evidence is about as solid as J. Edgar Hoover’s was for claiming the civil rights movement was controlled by communists: a handful of offenders on the edges of the insurgency, whose association is considered enough to presume everyone else’s guilt. Bob Fletcher, a former leader of the Militia of Montana, sums up the situation by reversing Sturgeon’s Law: “About 10 percent of America is racist, and I suppose that’s true of the militias, too. You get that in any organization.” Once you ignore this small klatch of Christian Identity bigots, the case for militia racism dries up. Though predominantly white and Christian, militia groups include blacks, Hispanics, and Asians; nonbelievers, Muslims, and Jews.

But what happened in Los Angeles in June ’94 went beyond this. The New World Order party was not in any sense a militia meeting—indeed, organizer Islam says he does not “really have an opinion” about the movement. The concert was a sign that men and women far removed from the militia milieu not only share the patriots’ basic concerns—a fear of state repression, a populist demand for self-government—but are recognizing that these “right-wingers” may be kindred spirits, political labels be damned. After all, blacks and white radicals have similar reasons for distrusting the state. Both fear the government’s increasing police powers. Both resent the abuses of civil liberties that have come with the war on drugs, and both accuse government officials of being involved with the drug trade themselves. The firebombing of MOVE and the beating of Rodney King catalyzed the same resentment among blacks that the Ruby Ridge standoff prompted among many whites.

The Waco holocaust brought the message home. Almost half the Branch Davidians killed at Mount Carmel were minorities—28 blacks, six Hispanics, and five Asians. So there was a good reason for militants of different races to start cooperating: more and more, they seemed to be fighting the same fight. As Fletcher put it, “As things get worse, blacks and whites will be thrown into the same trashpail.” To avoid that fate, the black nationalist and militia movements began to fuse along their edges. As of yet, no media have covered this story. Tracking it down meant following a labyrinthine phone tree, and often calling people who were at first too suspicious to talk. Consequently, it is hard to say just how widespread the crossover is. It is clear, though, that the intersection is real and growing.

The firebombing of MOVE and the beating of Rodney King catalyzed the same resentment among blacks that the Ruby Ridge standoff prompted among many whites.

Two organizations figure prominently in the tale: Zulu Nation and the Nation of Islam. Zulu Nation was born in the early days of hip hop. Afrika Bambaataa has been a DJ and community organizer in New York City since the 1970's; along with Grandmaster Flash, Cool Here, and others, he was one of the founding fathers of rap. Zulu Nation was his creation. Meant as an alternative to gangs, the group invited ghetto youth to concentrate on rapping, breakdancing, and graffiti, and not on criminal violence. Today, the Zulu Nation includes musicians, filmmakers, and others around the world—a quarter-million, claims Islam, himself a member. One of the “primary functions of getting in,” he adds, is sharing and spreading interest in theories about the New World Order.

In 1994, Islam's friend Hilder appeared on *The Front Page*, a popular talk show on KJLH, a black-oriented radio station in Los Angeles owned by Stevie Wonder. There, Hilder mixed the conspiracy theories popular in the militia movement with appeals specifically targeted to a black community ruptured by unemployment and crime. One listener who tuned in that day was Rasul Al-Ikhlās, host of *The Story of Soul*, a wide-ranging public-access television program. Al-Ikhlās invited Hilder onto his show—and, at his guest's suggestion, had Fletcher come along as well.

News of the newcomers traveled fast, thanks largely to the Zulu Nation network. Hilder's black girlfriend had the amusing experience of visiting a village in Belize, only to be recognized by a native who had heard a tape of her speaking on the radio. Soon, Islam introduced Hilder to Michael Moor, a reporter for the Nation of Islam's newspaper, *The Final Call*, and

shortly afterward Moor appeared on Hilder's radio show. There they argued that the powers-that-be are driving America toward a race war, and that men and women of all ethnicities should work together to defuse the battle before it starts. Other Muslims, such as Cedric Welch of *The Final Call*, also began to show an interest in the militia/patriot worldview.

Many readers, learning that elements of the militia and Black Muslim communities have begun to cooperate, will assume that the common ground is bigotry. Both groups, after all, have been plagued by accusations of anti-Semitism. There is indeed anti-Jewish sentiment among many Black Muslims—Ihilder recounts an unpleasant confrontation with the infamous Khalid Mohammed, whom he describes as a “crazy” who wants to kill all whites, especially the Jewish ones—but it does not play much of a role, if any, in the black-white crossover. “The blacks that are anti-Semitic won't have anything to do with me,” Ihilder explains, “because they're also anti-white.” (Ihilder did once share a microphone with Steve Cokely, a black militant I have witnessed citing *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and casually using the word “Jewboy,” but the pairing didn't work out: after the program, Hilder was snubbed by Cokely and his companions because of his race.) As for the other side of the equation, Fletcher's wife is part Jewish and Hilder, though a Christian, is a former member of the Jewish Defense League. The patriot movement as a whole includes many Jews, including half the directorship of the San Diego Militia.

More troublesome is the extent to which the new overlap is based not on a common political agenda but on dubious conspiracy theories. Hilder and company's power analysis, alas, owes more to Gary Allen than to C. Wright Mills. It is one thing to expose corruption in high places, or the growing power of executive agencies, or the rapidly globalizing corporate state. It is quite another matter to assert that a single cabal of Illuminati stands behind it all. Even leaving credibility-of-evidence issues aside, the sheer resilience of the power elite indicates that such a conspiracy could not be true, for much the same reason that centrally planned economies fail while free-market systems succeed.

But below the surface one finds a concern with issues more concrete than the quest for a Grand Unified Conspiracy Theory. As Mack Tanner put it in *Reason* magazine, people “aren't scared because they believe in conspiracy theories. They believe conspiracy theories because they're scared.” The militiamen want to preserve gun rights, free speech, national sovereignty, and privacy, and to prevent any more incidents like Waco or Ruby Ridge. Those may not be the black militants' chief concerns, but that does not mean they disagree with the militias' agenda. Al-Ikhlās says, “I don't like guns, period,” but then adds that he supports the Second Amendment. Islam agrees that gun control is not an essential issue, but he believes that guns represent power and control, and that this is why the state wants to seize them. For their part, the blacks are mostly concerned with local issues—Al-Ikhlās, for example, is now involved in an effort to turn an empty, government-owned building over to a volunteer drug treatment program.

And behind both the conspiracy talk and the single-issue concerns, there is common political ground. The militiamen want to make America a decentralized, constitutional republic; the black nationalists are calling for neighborhood power—which, in practice, is pretty much the same thing. “I would like

the government, the police and councilmen, to live right here in the community," concludes Al-Ikhlās. Moor goes further, striking an almost Tolstoyan note: "If we're all following and submitting to the will of God . . . then you don't need government." Hilder, a philosophical anarchist, is quick to agree.

This is not to say that any of this will last. Moor, for one, has cooled to the idea of black-white cooperation. When I called him to discuss this story, he was unenthusiastic. "I don't talk to the white media no more," he told me gruffly. "Every time we talk to Whitey, something happens." The militias "seem sincere," he continued, "but you have to wonder what their hidden agenda is, who's pulling their strings." There's always the chance that "behind closed doors, we're still niggers to them. I'm not necessarily talking about Anthony [Hilder], but sometimes I don't even know where he's coming from." After all, "They're getting too much pub' from the white media. . . . After they overthrow the overlords, maybe they'll start lording it over people of color."

Al-Ikhlās—a black and a Muslim, but not a Black Muslim—remains tolerant, but even he has his doubts. "When militia people talk about 'the good old days,' I want to ask them, 'How far does the militia want to go back?'" Despite this, he rejects the popular image of a movement dominated by white supremacists. "The media portray it differently than what it re-

ally is," he says.

The alliance that remains is determined to stick it out, and to propagate its message as far as it can. Islam has been busy producing an album on Warner Brothers for a rap/rock supergroup called the Bubbleheads, a CD he promises will include a trove of conspiracy lore. In the meantime, Hilder has recorded a rap of his own, a catchy number called "Ordo Ab Chao." And if the vision it expresses seems a little, er, apocalyptic . . .

Masonic mind manipulation
Inciting riots, it's crisis creation
Biochip implantation
Vaccinate your kid for U.N. identification

. . . the wake-up message behind the *X-Files* motifs is still loud and clear:

They've numbed us down and dumbled us down
With TV, drugs, the NEA, and public schools.
They've taken your brightest and our best
And made them public fools.

Cast the tired old labels aside. From here on out, things only get stranger.

The Sign of the Cross

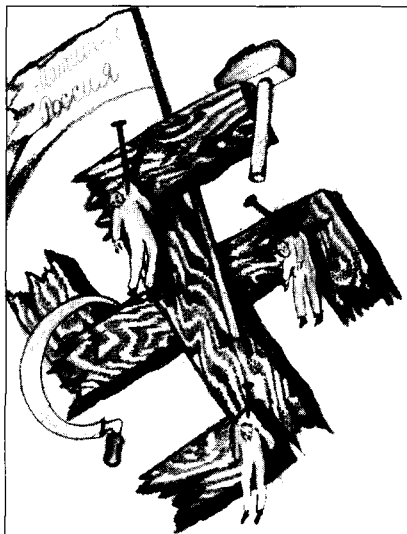
by Hayden Head

Grief has no order unless one regards
The gasping spasms of pain as rhythmic;
Grief is not fooled by garden-like graveyards—
The form is false, the truth cataclysmic.
One mother's son has grown wild and angry:
He ranges the night with his savage friends.
At home his mother prays the rosary,
"Hail, Mary, full . . ." A distant siren sends
A long shudder of cold and certain dread
Through her ephemeral murmur of prayer.
She makes the sign of the cross, bows her head,
And weeps the wracking rhythm of despair.
Full of grief, she tried to inscribe the air,
But she will stroke his brow and blood-stained hair.

Radical Populism on the Volga

Russia's Neo-Nazi Opposition

by Wayne Allensworth



Anna Mycek-Wodrecki

On May 8, 1995, President Boris Yeltsin addressed an auditorium filled with gray-haired war veterans, their chests bedecked with rows of ribbons and medals, and told them of the cost of victory in the Great Patriotic War. Citing new archival research, Yeltsin revealed the "terrifying figure" of 26,549,000 Soviet citizens "lost" in the war against "Hitlerite fascism." Yeltsin then closed his speech with remarks that may have seemed cryptic to some observers. "Many in Russia and beyond its borders are now wondering," he claimed, "why, half a century after the collapse of fascism, immunity to fascist and racist ideas in our society has weakened. . . . We must purge Russia of the fascist plague, completely and forever."

It may be that Westerners believed Yeltsin was referring to the bombastic Vladimir Zhirinovsky or, perhaps, to the "red-brown" neocommunists who had done so well in the December 1993 elections and who were already campaigning to expand their influence in the State Duma. But the immediate cause of Yeltsin's concern was probably something else, a relatively new, and far more radical, force whose activities had prompted the president to issue a decree early last year on combating "fascism." This force, dubbed the "new opposition" by Russian journalists, is more willing to resort to violence than the old "red-brown" opposition. Like the Zhirinovskites, the "new opposition" boasts of having no ties to the discredited communist *nomenklatura* regime, and has worked particularly hard to recruit young people. Unlike Zhirinovsky, however, they are impatient and weary of talk. Russian greatness will be restored, not by *boltuni* (windbags) in the State Duma, but by implementing what they call the "national revolution."

The "new opposition" made its conspicuous debut at the Russian White House during the September-October 1993 showdown between Yeltsin and the recalcitrant Supreme Soviet, when an organization known as Russian National Unity (RNU), under the leadership of a former electrician and karate instructor named Aleksandr Barkashov, provided what was

probably the largest (from 100-300 men) and best-armed contingent of White House defenders. The RNU fighters, accompanied by brethren warriors from the "Legion of Werewolves" (the organization's leaders were later arrested after plans for a series of terrorist attacks were uncovered), were made all the more conspicuous by the stylized swastikas that decorated their paramilitary uniforms, and by their declared aim, according to one ubiquitous Werewolf, of shooting "first the democrats and then the communists."

There was ample reason to take the young stormtrooper seriously: volunteers from Russian neo-Nazi and neofascist organizations, which appear to be growing exponentially in the ruins of postcommunist Russia (one Russian journalist claims that RNU is the fourth largest political organization in Russia), have fought in the Balkans War, mostly alongside the Serbs (some prefer the Croats, seeing them as the true torchbearers of the "Aryan" ideal), and in the many "hot spots" where civil war and insurrection have flared up in the former Soviet domain. Barkashov personally offered his services to the state at the height of the conflict in Chechnya, but the offer was not accepted. No matter. The "new opposition" continues to prepare for the day when they will seize power by organizing sympathizers to distribute the burgeoning number of neo-Nazi and neofascist newspapers, books, and videos (and finding a sympathetic helping hand in some government-run printing facilities), establishing training camps for their militant "storm detachments," targeting young people, along with military and security personnel, for recruitment, and establishing ties with trade unions and local officials in the regions.

Their message is one we have heard before: the Russian "genotype" is the purest "offshoot" of the "Aryan" race and is destined to dominate the world. For Russia to reestablish her greatness and save the "Aryans" from extinction the world over is a simple matter to be achieved through a violent seizure of power followed by the implementation of a program of eugenics that calls for the extermination of Jews, Caucasian "blacks," invalids, drunks, and imbeciles. The Russian war machine will

Wayne Allensworth writes from Purcellville, Virginia.

gear up once more to insure economic prosperity, and an anti-crime crackdown will restore order. Like most vile racists, the neo-Nazi “national revolutionaries” deify the Russified “Aryan” race, attributing special mystical qualities to it, while hating true religion, particularly Christianity, though some celebrate ancient Russian paganism and black magic as a sort of New Age alternative, and others see an emasculated Russian Orthodoxy (so long as Christ is portrayed as an “Aryan,” and the Golden Rule applies only to other “Aryans”) as a useful instrument for a national-revolutionary regime to exploit.

One may be startled by the growth of a blatantly Nazi ideology in Russia, which provided the bulk of the Soviet human waves slaughtered in the struggle with Hitler, but Russian neo-Nazism is the legitimate child of Stalinism. When the “Great Leader and Teacher” chose “Socialism in One Country” over Trotsky’s internationalist “Permanent Revolution,” it was merely a matter of time before National Bolshevism became the prevailing ideology of what was the Soviet Russian Empire. In fact, many hopeful Russians of extreme nationalist persuasion thought that Josef Vissarionovich would eventually scrap communist ideology altogether. After all, he had brought back Russian nationalism, albeit in a new form, declared war on the Jews (Trotskyites, “cosmopolitans”), and restored the Empire. A younger generation, freed from the emotional baggage of memories of the Great Patriotic War and hungering for something to believe in, something to belong to, is not put off by the national-revolutionary variant of Stalinist national socialism.

Still, the appeal of national-revolutionary propaganda may not be its science fiction version of history, or its preoccupation with conspiracies (one national-revolutionary propagandist interpreted the selling of Herbalife products in Moscow as part of the “cosmopolitan”-Masonic plot to pollute the precious body fluids of “Aryan” Russia), but rather its honesty. Russian journalist Aleksandr Burtin, commenting on the growth of “fascist” influence in Russian trade unions, diagnosed the real danger for Russia as not so much fascists telling lies, but “fascists telling the truth.” According to Burtin, the great danger facing the chaotic mess of postcommunist Russia is that conventional politicians, satisfied with their own power and insulated from the distraught masses, will remain unresponsive to the complaints of workers who haven’t been paid in months, to old people reduced to begging, to ordinary Russians appalled by the vulgarized Westernization of their country that manifests itself in strip joints, casinos for the “Mafiosi,” and pornography, and to patriotic citizens concerned about the influence of international organizations in formulating Russian policy. Until the politicians address these issues, the field is left open to the only force that seems ready, willing, and able to do something. Indeed, as national-revolutionary luminary Eduard Limonov told Burtin, “There is no need to think that this economic reform was foisted on us by Israel or the CIA. It is profitable to those who live here . . . to those same bureaucrats who ruled you [under the Soviet regime]. They know where to steal and what to sell.” As Burtin so succinctly put it, “True fascism is an alternative to false democracy.”

That such conditions help produce a sense of apathy and resignation for some and frustrated impotence among others, and that violent action, however futile, should appear attractive to those so inclined should be no surprise. We, too, have our own extremist groups whose exaggerated conspiracy theory is a wildly distorted mirror image of similar frustrations

expressed by ordinary people. In fact, it appears that some members of the most extreme fringe organizations in America have found friends abroad. The *New York Times* reports that neo-Nazi and skinhead groups in Germany have benefited from manuals on building explosive devices obtained from their American counterparts. In Russia, American authors not infrequently share the insights of their racist wisdom with Russian neo-Nazis through such publications as the Radical Right Party’s journal *Ataka* (Attack), and the Russian National Union’s *Shturmovik* (Stormtrooper). The People’s Nationalist Movement publication, *Zemshchina* (Land of the Boyars), employs a New York-based correspondent, and Russian radical Vladimir Marochkin boasts of his personal friendships with American and British skinheads and neo-Nazis. If the American Aryan Nation plans the demise of Z.O.G. (the Zionist Occupational Regime), Russian “patriots” rail at V.O.R. (in Russian, the Provisional Occupational Regime, whose initials spell the word *vor*, thief).

The end of the Cold War has spawned a host of such movements, with their curious mixture of conspiratology, pseudoreligion, mass movement populism, racial “science,” and potential for violence, around the world. In Ukraine, the Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA) made its first big splash on the world stage via a July 1995 clash of its paramilitary “self-defense” units with police in Kiev. The clash was ostensibly brought on by the refusal of the authorities to allow the burial of the Ukrainian Church’s deceased patriarch at Kiev’s St. Sofia Cathedral, still officially operated under the auspices of the Moscow Patriarchate, but UNA leaders made plain their true intentions in the days following the violence in Kiev. After uniting all nationalist forces in Ukraine (mission—temporarily—accomplished), the current government, judged a Russian-sponsored “occupation” regime by the UNA, would be toppled and a “patriotic” one installed.

In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, American elites would do well to consider the Russian example and ponder the cost of leaving the truth-telling to extremists. Black racists and white radicals are right to the extent that they attack the corrosive effects of statist and globalist policies. Liberal policies have contributed to the destruction of the black family. Blacks must tackle the question of constructive self-definition. Globalism has diminished national and state sovereignty. America was and is more than an ideology. Moreover, beyond ideology and conspiratorial fantasy, the Oklahoma City tragedy may raise some questions long-forgotten by a secularized society spiritually hamstrung by consumerism and self-indulgence: Just what is it about human nature that begets cruelty and murder?

The Russian national-revolutionaries are right: we don’t need conspiracies to explain what is happening to us. Whether the Oklahoma bombing suspect (and self-styled antigovernment activist) who has been the willing recipient of generous farm subsidies; black racists who assail their people’s dependency on the state but who nevertheless support “affirmative action” programs; Russians who patronize casinos and porno films and complain about the Westernization of their country; Americans who gripe about our economic decline while watching their Japanese TVs; or lunatics who decide to exterminate innocents or blow up their own people to make a political point—whether such people know it or not, the enemy is, and always has been, us.

◀

The Long Hello

by J.O. Tate

"Literature is news that stays news."

—Ezra Pound

**Raymond Chandler: Stories
and Early Novels**
Edited by Frank MacShane
New York: The Library of America;
1199 pp., \$35.00

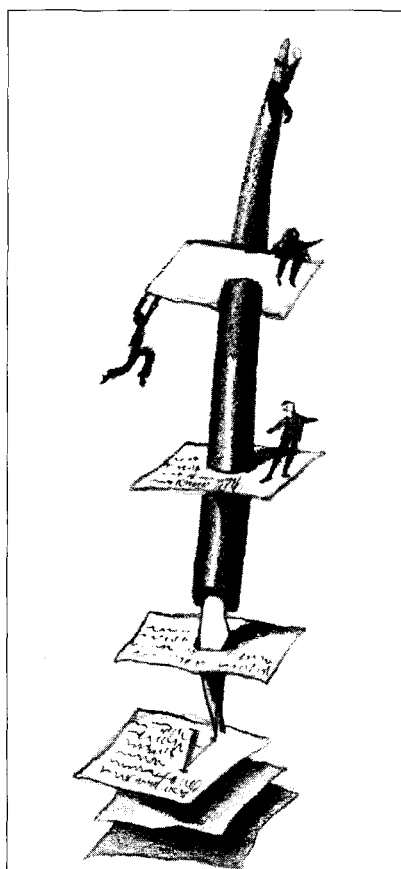
**Raymond Chandler: Later Novels
and Other Writings**
Edited by Frank MacShane
New York: The Library of America;
1076 pp., \$35.00



Seeing Raymond Chandler published in series with Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain and Flannery O'Connor might give us pause. But not for long, for Raymond Chandler himself told us what to say on this occasion, writing the lines for that delectable secretary, Miss Vermilyea, in Chapter 11 of *Playback* (1958), as she encounters the detective/narrator Philip Marlowe for the second time: "Well, well. Mr. Hard Guy in person. To what may we attribute this honor?" Since, as Marlowe puts it, Miss Vermilyea was quite a doll, I think we could and should specify to what we may attribute this honor.

Strictly speaking, the honor was earned in the only direct way that counts: Chandler has never been out of print and is widely read today in many languages. He is continually referred to as a standard reference, imitated ad infinitum, and is a constant presence in the mass media. All the Chandler movies are rebroadcast on cable—the ones that he wrote, the ones others did, and all the recreations and extrapolations. To say "film noir" is to conjure Chandler—"neo-noir" ditto. Without Chandler,

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the journalists would be without their catchphrases, "the mean streets," "the big sleep," "the long goodbye." Without Chandler, S.J. Perelman and Woody Allen would have had that much less to parody. Without Chandler, *Chinatown* and *Blade Runner* would have been unimaginable, Larry Gelbart could not have written *City of Angels*, and Ross Macdonald and John D. MacDonald and Robert B. Parker and Lawrence Sanders and Sara Paretsky and Sue Grafton and Walter Moseley and many another would not have given up their day jobs.

Though Raymond Chandler himself saw to it that he exploited his power in the movies and on radio and television, he knew very well that his appeal rested

on a literary achievement. Since his time, critics such as Philip Durham, Jerry Speir, and William Marling have written solid works about that achievement. Chandler's letters have been published in two different editions, two of his screenplays have appeared, and his life has been the subject of a formal biography. In addition, Chandler has been the object of considerable academic attention in the form of dissertations, theses, articles, and studies. J.K. Van Dover's *The Critical Response to Raymond Chandler* (1995) nicely summarizes the decades of increasing recognition. But surely the ultimate accolade has been the publication of the present elegant volumes.

Quite an honor it is. To behold and to hold these two volumes is to embrace old friends, but also to recognize that Philip Marlowe and his .38 revolver are hanging out with some highfalutin company. The hard-boiled dick is taking tea in the parlor with Emily Dickinson, and holding forth with Hawthorne and Melville and James. The news is that those treasured old paperbacks, their pulp paper disintegrating and their lurid covers fading, have been definitively republished in acid-free paper and sewn bindings to last for generations. Marlowe and his crowd—Eddie Mars and Moose Malloy, Velma Valento and Terry Lennox, Weepy Moyer and Dolores Gonzales, not to mention Miss Vermilyea—are now up there with Hester Prynne, Captain Ahab, and Christopher Newman in the Library of America, a series modeled on the French *Pléiade*. As the eponymous scarlet letter orbits with the Brasher doubloon, there is a fulfilling sense that Marlowe's creator, Raymond Chandler, had always aimed at the stars.

When Chandler began, he aimed

high—that is to say, in the best way to do so—by first aiming low. The story of Raymond Chandler's life and literary career is one of the most remarkable in the history of American literature; and though it is familiar, it is worth repeating. Conceived in Laramie, Wyoming, and born in Chicago in 1888, Raymond Thornton Chandler was soon exiled by his parents' divorce to Ireland and England. His secondary education at Dulwich College, with its emphasis on Latin and Greek, marked him for life with a keen sense of language and class. Though soon set up with a career in the civil service, Chandler dumped his job and tried to live as a literary bohemian—his accomplishments of those days, such as they were, have been collected by Matthew Bruccoli in *Chandler Before Marlowe* (1973). Chandler's literary aspiration, sense of exile, and ambivalence between the bourgeois and the bohemian, were already in evidence in Bloomsbury before World War I.

After returning to America, winding up in Los Angeles, and serving in the Canadian army in the war, Chandler began to rise as an executive in the oil industry. He married Cissy Pascal, 17 years his senior, after her divorce and his mother's death. The great crisis of his life came when he lost his lucrative job during the Depression, and decided to commit himself to writing in his middle age. He aimed high by aiming low when he accepted the demands of the marketplace: he would write for *Black Mask* and *Dime Detective*, beginning in 1933. He would write within the conventions of the hard-boiled school, but he would find a way to elevate and transform those conventions.

Since many of Chandler's stories of the 1930's were subsequently "cannibalized" for his novels, the editor of the Library of America's Chandler set, Frank MacShane, has published those that were not later transmogrified. The best of these stories show how Chandler brought poetry to the pulps, romance to realism, and literariness to popular entertainment. Chandler's three best stories are ostensibly about pearls, and show that before his novels he had already mastered the art of transcending the genre of the detective story. "Goldfish" (1936) is a straightforward tough-guy investigation which at the end makes us wonder whether the pearls are fakes. In "Red Wind" (1938), Chandler's fully developed art is both melodramatic and

self-referential, and the pearls are finally fakes of fakes. "Pearls Are a Nuisance" (1939) is Chandler's most extravagant venture into what Keith Newlin has called "hard-boiled burlesque." The fakes are real, and the self-mocking fakery of the narrative is "real"—a parody of investigations and languages, both cozy English and tough American. The "pearls" that all the fuss is about are Hitchcockian Macguffins, for the word *pearl* not only denotes five-point type but is also derived from the Latin *perua*, meaning "ham." Chandler thus slyly acknowledged that writing comes from writing, that writing is in some sense about its own composition, that he was hamming it up, and that he owed something to Dashiell Hammett. The split between the Anglo gent and the American tough guy in "Pearls Are a Nuisance" reflected Chandler's literary and social realities, and was incorporated in the double consciousness of Philip Marlowe, who did not appear until Chandler's first novel, *The Big Sleep* (1939).

The Marlowe novels were a big step up for Chandler, not only in terms of the extension of his aims, but also commercially and literarily: Philip Marlowe first saw the light of day in hard-bound, published by Knopf. *The Big Sleep*, *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940), and *The High Window* (1942) led directly to Hollywood, the big time and the big bucks. Twice nominated for an Academy Award, Chandler was not happy in Hollywood, and took it for all he could. MacShane has included Chandler's collaboration with Billy Wilder, the screenplay adapted from James M. Cain's *Double Indemnity*, but we should note that Chandler's original screenplays for *The Blue Dahlia* and *Playback* have previously been published. MacShane has included in this collection, however, Chandler's essay "Writers in Hollywood," which still stands up very nicely. He has included as well other essays and 11 of his letters. The only question one can raise about MacShane's choices, I think, has to do with the space taken up by the collaborative and derivative screenplay. Eliminating it would have made room for 100 more pages of Chandler's fascinating letters. As it is, however, the Library of America edition is a handsome and deserved recognition of a compelling writer.

Of course it was as a writer, not as a hacker of detective yarns, that Chandler

wanted to be recognized. That is exactly what so many of his letters are about, and indeed what his novels are crafted to show. Looking back at those novels today, we can see perhaps better than ever just what it meant to stake a reputation on writing itself, on style, rather than on what that writing purports to represent. But to see that means clearing away partial truths that, whatever their merit, limit our vision of Chandler, his books, and their continuing life.

One such limiting truth is that Chandler was a regionalist—that he virtually created Los Angeles. And of course we remember the powerful sense of place that Chandler vividly projects. Nostalgia addicts flock to such books as Edward Thorpe's *Chandlertown* (1983) and Ward and Silver's *Raymond Chandler's Los Angeles* (1987) and even the "Raymond Chandler Mystery Map" for that very reason. But the old Los Angeles is long gone and was going even as Chandler limned it, as he emphasizes in *The Little Sister* (1949). But going on and on about the Santa Monica pier and the Bradbury Building only proves that what Chandler gave us was on the page and not on the street, just as Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County was and is his property—one not to be confused with Lafayette County, Mississippi. Chandler's El Lay is a literary/mythological trope, not a place, and the best map of it is provided by T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land*, in which the Unreal City is figured as a desert. Fisher Kings are not hard to find in Chandler's pages, though they may not be easily identified in the Los Angeles White Pages.

That leads us to another and more powerful limiting truth: Chandler as a writer of quest romances or urban Gothics, in the main tradition of American literature. Seen in this light, Marlowe has something in common with Natty Bumppo and Huck Finn and the frontiersman. And it is quite true that Chandler fortified his novels with chivalric imagery. But even here we must remember that Chandler's romances were ironic ones, with bitter and frustrating endings. Marlowe finds no holy grail—usually he finds a dead sinner. Another limitation of the American romance model is that Chandler was himself not entirely an American. *The Long Goodbye* (1954) hints at the international novel, just as Chandler in his last days spent as much time in England as he could.

Raymond Chandler himself insisted

on another limiting and contradictory truth—namely that the Marlowe books were “realistic.” Considering their contrivance, their status as lurid melodramas, their conventional coincidences, we must find it hard to accept them as realistic. But he probably meant two particular things by his use of the category of realism: first, that his books were hard-boiled and not cozy; and second, that they reflected the truth about power in urban America. The implications of that second thought have never been fully examined, but they will be.

I think that today Raymond Chandler’s work can be seen most fruitfully as writing, and not as representation. The extent of his ambition can be glimpsed in his allusions to Shakespeare, Eliot, Hemingway, and Fitzgerald, but it can be seen most fully in his rich language—his similes and ironies, his wit and sense of beauty, his puns, anagrams, and etymological teasings. His discourse refers to itself continually—his writing is about writing, and it is a celebration of writing’s power to make us laugh, make us shudder, make us think, make us wonder, and make us turn the page. That power of writing was Chandler’s, and he

knew it and said so. That power he called “magic” and “music.” That power is the ultimate reason why Raymond Chandler has been canonized.

That power earned Chandler something greater than the considerable amount of money he made by it, and something even greater than the present recognition. That something is fame. Billy Wilder has declared that when people ask him questions about Hollywood, there are two names that are always mentioned first: Marilyn Monroe and Raymond Chandler. Monroe’s title as “sex goddess” speaks for itself, but Chandler’s charisma was achieved by performance on the page. Such a glamour is today a global, not a national, property; and indeed “Raymond Chandler” has been a character in at least two novels. He is truly a “man of letters” in all the languages and all the media of civilization. No wonder he claimed that he had taken “a cheap, shoddy, and utterly lost kind of writing, and . . . made of it something that intellectuals claw each other about.”

Chandler was a novelist all along, and not a scribbler of detective stories—just as he claimed. He gave us every indica-

tion of his detective’s repudiation of his job. In *The Big Sleep*, Marlowe “catches” the killer in the beginning, literally. At the end, he finds futility in having pursued a man who was not his case and was already dead. In *Playback* (1958), he tells his client to go kiss a duck and is lost in dreams of bliss. Chandler called Marlowe “the personification of an attitude,” and so he is. That attitude, I think, was one of Protestant individualism and decency staring in bemused horror at the depredations of modern mass culture. The illusion of literary “realism” was in parallel with the illusion of a new society: the fraud of self-transformation offered by the new mass-cult and exploited by the ruthless. Marlowe showed he was part of the problem in *The Little Sister*, by which gesture Chandler acknowledged the same about himself.

The Marlowe books, retaining a diagnostic and prophetic quality, are no more dated than literature is. According to the classical formula, they delight and instruct. Marlowe is more poet than detective, and is more interested in pursuing the Other than in earning his fee. Chandler pushed Marlowe into the ultimate of literary abysses in his last three novels, having him confront the illusion of film itself and of reality in Hollywood (*The Little Sister*), the illusion of writing with a novelist in the novel (*The Long Goodbye*), and the illusion of fiction when a stand-in for Chandler himself walks on stage to meet Marlowe (*Playback*). That is not the stuff of whodunits, but of a Shakespearean sense of illusion within illusion—the stuff that dreams, and literature, are made of.

Having survived their own day for two generations, Chandler’s novels have earned their status as classics in the simplest possible way. But by the time that Raymond Chandler drank himself to death in 1959, his own body (as distinguished from his literary corpus) was misplaced. Because of various confusions, that wealthy and famous man was buried where the indigent are interred in San Diego. I would like to think that Chandler has received, finally, a proper sendoff in the Library of America. In these pages, he is more than ever before recognized as a writer—and his work will continue to live by being read in a context far removed from the pulps where he began. But that distance is exactly what he did imagine—and justify. In that sense, we can say with the poet, “Here he lies where he longed to be.”

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Farmers and Thinkers

by Carin M. C. Green

The Other Greeks

by Victor Davis Hanson
New York: The Free Press;
541 pp., \$28.00



Between the eighth and sixth centuries B.C. there appeared the *polis*, the Greek city-state, an elusive entity which nurtured and defined ideals still central to Western European views of all that is “civilized.” How did the Greeks, up until then an unimportant and generally poor folk on the margins of Mediterranean society, manage this miracle? V.D. Hanson’s *The Other Greeks*, a book that is both excellent and deeply flawed, presents an explanation for the rise of the *polis* that is as old as Aristotle’s *Politics* (a work Hanson uses effectively) but which has faded from contemporary discussion. Hanson argues that it was the farmer—the small farmer—who made the *polis*.

The *polis* was not just the city—Athens, say, or Thebes. It was the city and the surrounding countryside. Since citizenship depended on a property qualification, the majority of the voting citizens in Greek *poleis* were farmers—not city-dwellers at all. Such farmers manned the hoplite phalanx, the extraordinarily successful infantry formation that, for most of these three centuries, marginalized both cavalry (the aristocrats) and light-armed fighters (the poor) in land-based war. They provided their own armor; in many *poleis* they elected their own generals (Xenophon’s *Anabasis* is a manual on how to lead an army that votes). Thus, political egalitarianism in the *polis* evolved along with, and in response to, the profound social, occupational, and military egalitarianism of an agrarian population.

The great strength of Hanson’s book, and the quality which should make it required reading for all students of Greek history, is that he *knows* this farmer in all his sweaty, leather-clad, crude reality. He knows his farm, too, his necessarily

diversified crops, his utilitarian views of women and slaves and children, his unending quarrels with fellow farmers over boundaries and water—all aspects of that lifelong self-interest that was, and remains, the key to agricultural survival. Hanson is the descendant of farmers, and a farmer himself. His identification with the Greek farmer of the *polis* period suffuses his book with a personal passion and a gritty, unblinking honesty. Vividly, and with impeccable scholarship, Hanson has restored the forgotten farmer to his proper place in the development of the *polis*.

The weakness of *The Other Greeks* is that Hanson wants his farmer to have *all* the credit, particularly for the moral basis of *polis* egalitarianism. He ignores the merchants, who transported surplus population to overseas colonies on their way out, and carried back, among other things, the metal for affordable armor. He discusses the farmer’s insistence on fair laws fairly applied, but neglects the importation of alphabetic writing, the tool of trades and intellectuals, even though written laws were what took the legal process out of the hands of the aristocrats. Why does he do this? For the same reason others before him since the *polis* period itself have done it: because what the Greeks accomplished was truly remarkable, and we want to be a part of it.

The Greeks of the fourth century were the first to muscle the evidence into a culturally acceptable form, and their example has been studiously followed over the millennia. Recent efforts to insert into Athens’ glory the missing images of women, Africans, and Semitic peoples generally have been, in part, a reaction to the 19th century’s determination to prove that classical Greeks were tall, blond, and “Northern European” (a/k/a “Aryan”). It has never been *enough* that the Greeks were the Greeks: they must somehow also be *us*.

Hanson, unlike most of these cultural propagandists, has a good deal of ancient political theory on his side, as well as a substantial amount of hard archaeological evidence, supported well, if not overtly, by the historical accounts. It is therefore all the more distressing (though not surprising: the Athenians were past masters at the game themselves) that he

should have succumbed to this ancient, ignoble, and distorting determination to use the accomplishments of Athens as proof of the moral superiority of a particular people. By doing so, he has compromised the unassailable central portion of the book—his account of the Greek farmer—and he will deservedly reap much controversy and criticism as a result.

What Hanson wants, for all his egalitarianism, is what elitists since the beginning of time have wanted: eternal verities. In the pursuit of these, his egalitarianism takes on an implicit layer of class bias. It makes no difference that Plato was defending the aristocratic life, while Hanson seeks to vindicate the *anti*-aristocratic agricultural life. They both want to believe that creating civilization is like raising grapes or horses—a socially neutral process.

This is the underlying meaning of Hanson’s “agrarian ideology,” and everything in *polis*-period Greece argues against it. Similar conditions and values produced the aristocratic, farmer-despising, warrior-class, land-based Spartans as well as the egalitarian, inventive, protean, sea-based Athenians. When the Persians marched against Greece the first time, *only* Athens and little Plataea stood against the invasion. The Greek states north of Athens capitulated without question; the states in the Peloponnesus, like Sparta, waited. “Agrarian ideology” be damned: Athens and Plataea stood against the Persians at Marathon because, for all kinds of self-serving and idealistic reasons, they believed they should stand against the Persians. The other Greeks played the odds, and lost.

Who can read Herodotus’ account of Marathon without being moved, even today, as that small determined army of hoplites met the unknown, numerically superior invasion force of Persia? Just as moving is his account of Thermopylae, ten years later, where 300 Spartans died holding back the thousands of Persians led by Xerxes, who wanted revenge for Marathon. Predictably, Hanson—like Plato’s Athenian Stranger in *The Laws*—is much happier with Marathon than Thermopylae, because Thermopylae was followed by Salamis, the queen of all sea battles. After the Spartans fell, Athenians recognized they could not fight on

land and win, so they abandoned their city and their land. They relied on their triremes, warships rowed by any able-bodied male available—citizen, foreigner, pauper, even slave—and again, against all odds, they won. This battle, though, lacked the essential moral quality. Hanson does not explain, because he can't, just how a land battle fought by landowners produces a citizen morally superior to a sea battle fought by landowners, landless (not necessarily poor) men and paupers side-by-side. For Plato it was a simple matter of class; Hanson thinks it was a matter of occupation. In either case, there is no morality here worthy of the name.

We are asked to believe that a *polis* capable of survival only through a sea battle was a *polis* already unworthy of its "agrarian ideology." The decline of the *polis*, he thinks, came with the ascendancy of the landless, who "inject their own nonagrarian values into the social and political fabric" of the agrarian city-state. We all know the associations of that argument. The principle that if you fought for your country, you ought to be allowed to participate in its government, Hanson implicitly argues, was ethically flawed. But after Salamis, Athenian farmers were quite willing to continue to accept two benefits: the profits of the Laurium silver mines, and the sacrifices of the landless—Athens as a naval power sent far more landless rowers than farmers out to die. All this, I think, offers evidence of some traditional agrarian values having contributed to the *decline*, rather than the growth, of the *polis*. Hanson's championing of the Greek farmer has therefore done him more disservice than he merits.

There is a curious paradox here, one the Greeks themselves would have ap-

preciated. The excellence of Hanson's book has as its source his own deep respect for farmers and farming. Its flaws, on the other hand, are largely traceable to his ingrained contempt for intellectuals, a characteristic instantly recognizable from Aristophanes' farmers, such as Dicaeopolis or Strepsiades. This book, regardless of its subject, was work for the intellect. If the task is worthy, so are the tools required to do it. Neither Dicaeopolis nor Strepsiades, it is worth remembering, was capable of writing a Greek play or even of following a philosophical argument. Left in their hands, Athens would have been indistinguishable from any other Mediterranean agricultural community.

What Hanson has seen is the disrespect into which the farmer's work has fallen. He knows—as the ancients knew—that farming was an essential component of civilization, and that it was also symbolic of the civilizing process. Civilization is not an inalienable right, and it is never secure. It is the result of the work, hard work, completed every day for a lifetime, by *all* people—rural and urban, farmers or merchants, intellectuals or craftsmen or laborers—who value a civilized life, *regardless of their station*. That is the true legacy of Greece of the *polis* period, of Marathon, of Thermopylae, of Salamis, of the great art, of the exhilarating and dangerous ideas, of the venal politicians, the ambitious leaders, of those who died bravely or survived by luck and opportunism—and indeed, of the women, children, foreigners, and slaves who lived and died with them but had no true speaking part in this great tragicomedy. For those few years, in one or two places on this earth, they worked together to create something magnificent (it is symbolically right that Acropolis workers, whether free, alien, or slave, all got equal pay). Hanson has written a flawed and controversial testimony to the work of only one group among them. True, they have been forgotten, and unjustly so; true also, they formed the backbone of what is still a predominantly agrarian economy. But they are not alone, or uniquely superior to their fellows, and in treating them as though they were Hanson risks falling into that mire of class-based enmity that constituted Athens' greatest perennial weakness.

Carin M.C. Green is an assistant professor of classics at the University of Iowa.

Lone Star Rising

by Allan Carlson

The Thirty Years War: The Politics of the Sixties Generation

by Thomas W. Pauken

Ottawa, Illinois: Jameson Books;
220 pp., \$22.50

Reclaiming Morality in America: Why Traditional Morals Are Collapsing and What You Can Do About It

by William Murchison

Nashville: Thomas Nelson;
189 pp., \$16.99



The development of a uniquely Texan conservatism has occurred over the last quarter century. A central figure in this transition was the late M.E. Bradford, professor of English at the University of Dallas, literary essayist in the tradition of the Vanderbilt Agrarians, and prominent critic of the political Lincoln.

In 1972, Bradford rallied to the cause of George Wallace, only to see this last important example of Democratic populism halted by a bullet in the Alabama governor's spine. With the Party of Jefferson and Jackson dominated by the McGovern left and the new sexual and moral minorities, Bradford swallowed hard and turned to the Party of Lincoln. He became a prominent early backer of Ronald Reagan and convinced many of his fellow Southern intellectuals to follow. Even when vicious calumnies denied him the post of chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1981, Bradford remained loyal to the populist conservatism found within the GOP. He led his own last charge in 1992 on behalf of Pat Buchanan's first presidential campaign. Two years later, conservative Republicanism was in the ascendance in the old Texas Republic, heralded by Senator Phil Gramm's presidential bid, the election of a Republican governor, significant gains in the state legislature, and the victory of a strong movement conservative as chairman of the state party. A new magazine, *The Texan Republic*, even emerged to give voice and definition to these unlikely events.

The books under review here are best understood as expressions of this new

LIBERAL ARTS

THAT'S ALL, FOLKS

"Today is the birthday of Clark Clifford—he's 89—and Jimmy Buffet, 41."

—Bob Edwards on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition,"
December 25, 1995.

Texas-styled right. Thomas Pauken's *The Thirty Years War* is the political memoir of a Texas-reared Catholic lad, lured to Georgetown University in 1961, who trains in the political trenches of the Young Republican organization during the Goldwater years. Over the next three decades, Pauken becomes a pilgrim, taking part in or touching virtually all of the significant political events of his time. He serves in Army intelligence in Vietnam, running agents in Chan Doc province, and uncovering the careerism, corruption, and carefully constructed military illusions that were undermining the American cause. He comes home to work in the Nixon White House for presidential counsel John Dean, and narrowly avoids taking a job as the liaison between Dean and the Department of Justice regarding "internal security problems" (as in Watergate). He returns to Texas to study law, run for Congress, and build the Republican apparatus. Returning to Washington as part of the Reagan Revolution, he survives a grueling confirmation process to become head of ACTION, the federal agency overseeing the Peace Corps and VISTA, where he battles the leftward trend bequeathed by the Carter years. Pauken's election as Texas GOP party chairman in 1994 brings his pilgrimage full circle.

The theme unifying the book is the "intergenerational fight" between the "new left" (and fellow travelers such as Bill Clinton) and the reenergized conservative cause. This war, he argues, began in the 1960's over the issues of Vietnam and communism and continues in recent battles to this day. Yet Pauken's own analysis suggests a more complex dynamic. While he skewers "new leftists" for their fawning support of the Viet Cong, and while he repeatedly endorses the anticommunist cause, he also admits that America's "most fatal mistake" in Vietnam occurred through American complicity in the October 1963 deposal of President Diem; almost inadvertently, he builds a case against the continued American commitment after that date. In tracing the conflict between left and right in these years, Pauken also identifies a third force in Washington, variously labeled "the American establishment," "corporate liberals," and "pragmatic corporate managers." As the ideologues conduct massive public battles, this shadowy third force flits in and out of Pauken's story. Oddly, it is the "corporate liberals," rather than the left

or the right, who usually win, something Pauken might have more fully explored.

Wisely, the publisher has edited lightly, and the reader feels sure that this is Pauken's own story. The words, phrases, and judgments offered have an authentic sound, which should make this book a valuable resource for future historians of late 20th-century American conservatism.

Reclaiming Morality in America, William Murchison's popular history of moral collapse in 20th-century America, reflects another strain of the new Texas conservatism. Son of an old Texas family, a historian trained at the University of Texas, and for 20 years a columnist at the *Dallas Morning Star News*, Murchison carefully dissects the moral disorders of our time.

Defining morality as "a set of propositions about who we humans are, with accompanying guidelines for the proper care and maintenance of our nature," Murchison correctly concludes that the current immorality in America is not simply a product of the 1960's. At the deepest level, it was the Enlightenment's skepticism toward divine authority that undermined moral certainty, and opened the floodgates for the "liberations" of the 1920's and 1960's. Murchison ably traces this attitude's negative effects on "the solemnity and grandeur of the marital promise," and its encouragement of pornography, fornication, and homosexuality.

Addressing the issue of possible solutions, Murchison endorses familiar policy steps: an increase in the federal tax deduction for dependents; a school voucher plan; and the abolition of no-fault divorce. Yet he places more emphasis on the construction of a "new counterculture" resting on the "three teaching institutions: family, church, and school." Repentance and character-building, he insists, can be achieved through new forms of entertainment, morality-infused schools, and the mutual reinforcement of family and church.

If Murchison falls short, it is in underestimating the countercultural requirements for moral reform. Vouchers, for example, will not be enough to generate a new order (and, indeed, may subject private schools that receive them to new forms of state guidance). The more promising avenue here is home education, which truly renews the functional basis of the family. Moreover, family decline in this century has been driven by

the expansion of both state and industry. While Murchison properly understands and excoriates the former, he spends too little time on the consequences of the latter.

Taken together, Pauken's "movement conservatism" and Murchison's "social conservatism" combine well, and explain much about recent political changes in Texas. Missing from both books, however, is a full appreciation of the importance of the economic populism that drove the Wallace campaign in 1972. If and when that native Southern ingredient is reintroduced into the formula, the results will be potent for conservatism, for the Republican Party, for Texas, and for the nation.

Allan Carlson is the president of The Rockford Institute and the publisher of *Chronicles*.

The Politics of Causation

by Sol Schindler

Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War

by Susan L. Woodward

Washington, D.C.:

The Brookings Institution;

536 pp., \$42.95



There are two popular theories of how the war in Yugoslavia started. Dr. Susan L. Woodward in *Balkan Tragedy* shows how both are wrong, and gives us a well-documented and convincing history of the causes that led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

One opinion, widely held in this country, is that the fighting in Bosnia is part of a pattern of aggression by the Serbs against the legitimate governments of sovereign members of the United Nations. Internationally recognized borders have been violated by Serbs seeking the creation of a greater Serbia, meaning the incorporation into Serbia of portions of both Croatia and Bosnia, and the forced expulsion of non-Serbian populations (ethnic cleansing) from these areas. Such acts of aggression are

clear violations of international law, and the aggressor should be punished. To this end the United Nations, often led by the United States, has imposed sanctions on Serbia, maintained an arms embargo, a no-fly zone, and brought other forms of psychological pressure to bear. In some ways the situation is analogous to that of Iraq or Libya.

The second popular view is that the conflict in Yugoslavia is really a civil war, based on hatreds that have been kept in a deep freeze by a totalitarian state. With the fall of communism, these ethnic conflicts have sprung up like repressed coil springs. This view is held in Europe and Canada, precisely those countries that have committed troops to U.N. peacekeeping efforts. In 1992, the Europeans tried to negotiate an ethnic partition of Bosnia into cantons; although they subsequently recognized Bosnia as an independent republic, they continued to maintain that only a political compromise could bring peace. Hence their forces in Yugoslavia are there for humanitarian reasons: to maintain some sort of cease-fire so that essential supplies can be brought to civilian populations and to set an atmosphere conducive to talks among the contending forces.

There are obvious contradictions in both of these theories. First, one may ask that if it is permissible for Croatia and Bosnia to secede from Yugoslavia, a

member in good standing of the United Nations and one with internationally recognized borders, why is it not permissible for Serbian Bosnia to secede from a republic which had never existed before and whose borders had been drawn initially by a communist dictator? As for the theory of age-old enmities, some of it is simply not true. The Yugoslavia that arose after World War I was a result of the Pan-Slavism popular at that time. The Slovenes and Croats, anxious to divorce themselves from the Austrians and Hungarians, felt they had much in common with their Serbian cousins. True, there had been considerable animus between Turk and Serb for over 500 years, but in modern Yugoslavia both Muslims and Serbs coexisted reasonably well, with a significant rate of intermarriage. The Muslims did not call themselves Turks, and the term Yugoslav was popular in both groups. (Of greater import, of course, was the carnage of World War II, in which the Serbs suffered huge losses of population.)

Dr. Woodward states that the Yugoslav conflict is the result of transforming a planned economy to a market economy, and of a one-party authoritarian state to a multiparty democracy. Further, in a country where there is no majority and everyone is a member of a minority, the preservation of human rights becomes paramount. As difficult as the problem was, it became even more so with the changing international scene. Yugoslavia as one of the leaders of the Third World had been able to profit from the Cold War by receiving assistance from both sides. Despite this prolonged economic aid, however, it could never keep its economy consistently healthy, and found itself in a foreign debt crisis just as the Cold War was ending and the deep pockets of the United States and the Soviet Union were closing.

All through its post-World War II existence, Yugoslavia juggled with political reforms, at one time centralizing its economy, at other times decentralizing, but regardless of which way the pendulum swung, further reform seemed always necessary. In time the decentralization momentum became enormous, to the detriment of the federal government, where both its resources and its problem-solving ability were concerned, so that finally that government, bereft of authority, became a hollow symbol. Thus, concludes Woodward, it was a fail-

ure of political mechanisms that brought about the collapse of Yugoslavia and the breakup of the republics into ethnic entities. The West exacerbated the situation by failing to recognize that only through the federal government could Yugoslavia's problems be contained, and, by assuming ethnic animosity to be the central problem, the West virtually assured that it would become so.

Woodward feels that supranational institutions requiring sustained interaction among people and sovereign states is the best system for resolving disputes. Thus a plan for the confederation of Croatian Bosnia with Croatia, and Serbian Bosnia with Serbia (vetoed by Germany and the United States because it "rewarded aggression"), seems to her a promising first step toward a greater Balkan confederation.

She is, of course, right, but while we can refrain from damaging a country's capacity to govern, one may wonder how the West can improve that capacity. Economic aid has been the traditional method, and sometimes it has worked. Whether we have sufficient resources now to try to do that in the Balkans is questionable, and whether Humpty Dumpty can ever be put back together is equally doubtful. Nevertheless, some form of cooperation or confederation may eventually arise, and if so, the kind of knowledge Woodward provides us would be immensely helpful in nurturing it.

Sol Schindler is a retired Foreign Service Officer.

LIBERAL ARTS

CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

According to the November 1995 issue of *Border Watch*, citizens living in the southernmost areas of Arizona are suffering repeated attacks from Mexican bandits who take advantage of the porous border to slip into the United States in search of prey. Although families have had their homes invaded and have been robbed at gunpoint, a local rancher who tried to get the government to take action found that "the U.S. government will not act for fear of disturbing relations with Mexico."

Freedom of Access

by John Lukacs

Stalin's Letters to Molotov 1925-1936

Translated by Katherine A. Fitzpatrick,

Edited by Lars T. Lih and

Oleg V. Naumov

New Haven: Yale University Press;

304 pp., \$25.00



Though the "opening" of the Russian archives is supposed to be a blessing for historians, there are plenty of reasons for skepticism. To begin with, "open" is an inaccurate term. What is available is selective, for so much remains closed,

many papers are suppressed, others are inaccurate, and some are even doctored or otherwise falsified. What is worse, their contents are seldom properly evaluated or interpreted by historians. This volume is an example.

It comprises 79 letters written by Stalin to Molotov from 1925 to 1935 (including only three brief notes from 1936) and presented by the recipient to the Central Party Archive in 1969. In recent years, some of these letters were published in Russian periodicals. We cannot know why Molotov chose to donate these and not others, but it is plausible to conclude that he believed them to be "safe." He was right: they are safe because they are unimportant, even insignificant. What about the years of the Stalin purges; of the crucial years 1939-1941 when Stalin chose to be a partner of Hitler's Germany; or indeed of the entire period of the war and thereafter—the ten years when Molotov was the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union? Letters from these times would be interesting, even though Molotov was only Stalin's toady, an unimpressive bureaucrat, a wooden dolt (whom John Foster Dulles once called the most formidable of diplomats). It is the habit of strong men to rely on subservient people to administer their foreign policy. There are many examples of this, including Hitler's Ribbentrop, and also that of some American Presidents, but I know of no one less independent and more subservient than Molotov.

The epistolary language is vulgar and marked, here and there, by communist terminology: a terminology that, in Stalin's case, sometimes conceals rather than reveals. The very tone suggests what so few people have recognized and still do not: that the victory of the Bolsheviks *reduced*, rather than strengthened, the importance of Russia in the world; a giant muddy state isolating itself from the rest of the world, administered by people of cramped characters and cramped minds. Of course Stalin was an exception—sort of: a cunning peasant boss, instinctively good at intrigues, among a crowd of fourth-rate men.

There is one, perhaps telling, matter: that concerning Lenin's so-called "Testament." It is now obvious that the text of this was doctored, if not altogether falsified, by Trotsky, who gave it to the American communist Max Eastman. Consequently Eastman, who of course sympathized with Trotsky, published a

version more complimentary to Trotsky than to Stalin. And when Stalin raised hell about this, Trotsky reacted in a cowardly and weak fashion. How many people in the West have loudly regretted for 60 years that the unspeakable Stalin, rather than Trotsky, should have been fated to bear the legacy of the great Lenin! Yet, if Trotsky or Zinoviev or Bukharin had governed Russia in the 1930's, Hitler would have had little or no trouble in upsetting any of them, and finally in conquering the Soviet Union. Such is the irony of history.



The importance attributed to these letters by their American editors is vastly overstated. Stalin's occasional remarks about "imperialists" were essentially the emanations of a suspicious isolationist who, while he did pay some attention to matters of world revolution and to the activities of communists abroad, treated them as definitely secondary elements in his considerations. Alas, commendable scholars such as Robert Conquest keep insisting that Stalin was a consummate Marxist. But this is utter nonsense, believed and stated by people who, from decades devoted to the study of the Soviet Union, have every reason to know better. It is not their factual knowledge but their understanding of human nature that is regrettably deficient. Yet Conquest's praise for this volume seems modest when compared to that poured out in endorsements by Alan Bullock, Alexander Dallin, and others. Robert C. Tucker, in his otherwise reasonable foreword, asks: "Did Stalin dismiss world revolution in favor of building up the Soviet state (as Trotsky, for one, alleged at the time), or did he remain dedicated to world revolution?" Lih's answer, based on the letters, is that in Stalin's mind "the Soviet state and international revolution coalesced." *Coalesced?* Perhaps. But which of the two *really* mattered to him? Stalin was crude, callous, cunning, and ignorant of much of the world; but he was no fool, and he eventually proved to be a great statesman, though no revolutionary. There is nothing in these letters to suggest the contrary.

John Lukacs's latest book is *The End of the Twentieth Century and the End of the Modern Age*.

Brief Mentions

Annotations. By John Keene. New York: New Directions; 85 pp., \$8.95

Annotations is broad in scope, dealing with the experience of a few generations of poor blacks, though Keene focuses on his own family. A native of St. Louis, Keene draws on his past to depict the travails of ghetto life: the brutality of white police, the violence of young criminals, the temptation to adopt a "gangsta" way of life. This might sound like an exercise in complaining, but to Keene, St. Louis is "a minefield of myth and memory," a place rich in urban folklore and blessed with a soiled charm. Even here, life is not without dignity. Faced with severe poverty, the family survives through a native resourcefulness and élan: Keene's grandfather draws on his experience as a farmboy in Mississippi, where he learned "how to keep bugs from devouring potatoes without pesticide, [and] how to sow okra seed." In the end, Keene's family leaves St. Louis for a rustic suburb populated by working-class Irish. The years of hardship leave their psychological mark, but this memoir is surprisingly free from bitterness. Despite the racial enmity that crops up in the 1965 Watts riots and in his own day-to-day experiences, Keene rarely indulges in racial polemics. Instead, he focuses on his story, allowing the reader to appreciate the sheer alienness of people and place. Keene's St. Louis is the site of strange junction of French and Negro culture. Conversing in a mixture of street slang and Creole, the characters impart many new terms to the reader, such as "rudiproots," "Aleikam Salaam," and "La Ba-Kair" (Keene furnishes a glossary). Even more memorable is Keene's flashing, fragmented prose, which combines evocative slang with an eloquence worthy of Thoreau. Keene points to Faulkner and Joyce as mentors, and the book is filled with strange projections from his past experience. ("Several liquor stores sat in walking distance of that narrow, Negro crossroads, having raised and reared the men who owned them.") The author's cleverness and sheer narrative energy lend his style a dazzling quality, like a fireworks display. The result is a short book that lingers indefinitely in the reader's mind.

—Michael Washburn

Letter From Caucasia

by William Mills

Georgia on My Mind



Getting from the Crimea to the Republic of Georgia presents several problems. I had been told that one way was to get to Trabzon on the Black Sea Coast of Turkey, and then take a boat to the coastal town of Batumi in Georgia. A guidebook had warned that foreigners could not cross the Georgian-Turkish border.

There were no flights to Trabzon from Simferopol, and I ended up on a small twin-engine prop plane loaded to the gills with passengers and merchandise bound for Istanbul. I do not recall anyone weighing anything and was thrilled when I felt the loaded plane heave itself into the air. Turkey is the shopping center for all the nearby republics of the former Soviet Union, and these chartered unscheduled flights were regularly filled with traders, taking what little might interest the Turks and returning with much sought after consumer goods. From Istanbul I took a modern jet to Trabzon and set about finding the Georgian consul general who was to ease my way to Batumi. He was, however, in Batumi, and while I waited for him to return I explored Trabzon, a town I recommend highly.

The pace is much less frenetic than that of Istanbul, and Trabzon is of a size you can get your imagination around. The town was colonized by merchants from Miletus during the eighth century B.C., like any number of sites around the Black Sea. Pursuing the various merchant explorers from different civilizations was one reason for my interest in the whole area. After all, it is the hope of new business that drives most exploration. Goods coming in by ship to Trabzon now find their way to Georgia and Armenia overland.

Another import is Russian women, all dubbed "Natashas" by the Turks. One afternoon I was looking around Boztepe

Park on a high hill above Trabzon and some young Turkish men invited me to take tea from a big samovar in the center of their table. One or two were geologists, one a Black Sea captain, and one a teacher at the police academy. They were busy kidding each other and the subject of Natashas came up. The teacher confided that he loved the Russian women. His salary was about \$130 a month and he spends \$100 for one night a month. When I exclaimed that this was three quarters of his salary, he replied, "Yes, but they are wonderful." I suggested he come to America where amateurs had knocked the bottom out of the trade.

Chance had it that I ran into a Canadian paramedic and an Irish doctor who worked for the Georgia-British Oil Company. They told me it was nonsense about not crossing the border by land, that they had come that way, and if I wanted a lift I was welcome. Next day I was racing along the beautiful coastal highway toward the border. First we had to pass the polite Turkish officials. Then, before the Georgian guards, there came a separate set of Russian border guards who were characteristically snotty and gave everyone a hard time. With their loss of prestige in the world, Russian soldiers have become even more touchy. After this brief unpleasantness, we were greeted by the Georgians and straightaway I got a taste of the famous Georgian hospitality. Much more of it was to come.

Leaving the coastal road, we drove through farmland, some of the highest cornstalks I have seen, and citrus groves. Since people are allowed to have their own cows now, a driver must stay alert for what amounts to open range. The Irish doctor was in a hurry to get back to Poti, their headquarters, before nightfall, and so I waved goodbye from the back door of the Intourist Hotel. I had arrived with no contact, having no Georgian or Russian at my command, and no reservation. As I discovered over and over, the younger people often spoke English and with little prodding a group of young women in the lobby pleaded with the desk clerk on my behalf for a room. He insisted he did not have one, but after more pleading, he said I should come back in two or three hours and perhaps

there would be something.

Nothing to do but go across the street to a very large park filled with people, fountains, and occasional classical music over a public address system. After a bit I found a place on a park bench beside a couple with a baby. Not having the languages I didn't try to strike up a conversation, but soon was making American noises to the baby who stared my way, all of which led to the couple introducing themselves. He was an out-of-work scientist. Part way into our conversation there was a big stir as a group of armed bodyguards accompanied some big shot.

I asked the woman on the bench whether she thought it was all right for me to take a photograph and she replied, "Why not? Of course." By now it was twilight and when I took a shot the flash went off automatically. At once a wide-bodied giant came hustling over with his weapon making lots of unfriendly noises, but the right Georgian words were said by others and he departed grumpily. It turned out I had photographed the main man in town, the godfather, Aslan Abashize, ruler of the Ajara region. Not good. Shortly after, a young fellow scientist by the name of Tengiz Gogelia came up and we all headed for a cafe and three bottles of champagne under an umbrella while a soft Georgian rain began to fall. Yes, I did think of "Rainy Night in Georgia," but kept it to myself. Before the evening was over I got a hotel room, and Tengiz and I became fast friends at the "Heineken Bar" where we took our late-night dinner. Several hours earlier, I had known no one in Georgia; now I had several friends. Tengiz was to provide my avenue to any number of interesting people in Tbilisi.

I met him again at sunrise with his small daughter on the gravel beach of the Black Sea, where we swam and watched an old man with his pants rolled up walking in the surf smoking a cigarette, when a Russian helicopter flew over. The old man didn't even look up. As I was to discover, there exist five Russian bases on Georgian soil. Not many days before, a United States Navy ship had docked in Batumi. So it goes.

Later that day Tengiz took me to visit the remains of a huge fortress I had passed on the way from the border. There was an excavation in progress un-

der the direction of the well-known archaeologist, David Khakhutaishvili. He stopped what he was doing and took us on a tour. What one can see are levels of Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman. The great walls, I believe, were built during the Ottoman period. All of this was built on Hellenistic ruins of the fourth or fifth century. Once again our merchant explorers from Ionian Miletus had made their appearance. Clearly in evidence were three different water systems from different occupations, clay pipe systems bringing the water from the mountains. The baths and steam rooms, I think, were from the Ottoman period. Back under a shelter where technicians were classifying the artifacts, I was shown Neolithic and Early Bronze Age tools that had turned up. As an aural background to my visit, I heard repeated artillery fire nearby and at my nervous question was told the Russian Army was practicing.

Two interesting things happened as we were leaving. The chief archaeologist said that the money for this excavation had come from Aslan Abashize and if I wrote about Georgia, I should be sure to mention this. The godfather was taking care of his own. Early that summer he had paid for a production of *Aida* with real elephants. A minute or two later as we neared our car, two men walked up to Tengiz and in Georgian asked to speak to him privately. I of course could not follow the conversation, but suddenly Tengiz said to me, "I need to go with them for a few minutes. Wait here." All this seemed odd. In 20 minutes or so he returned and merely said, "Let's go."

He told me in the car that at first he thought they were security men who might be asking questions about my photographing incident the day before. Instead, these men had taken Tengiz for one of the archaeologists. One of the men had been a miner deep in Siberia. At some point he had come on giant dinosaur bones and had smuggled them back to Georgia. He wanted a way to sell them for a lot of money. When Tengiz then told him he was not an archaeologist, the man became a little excited and began threatening Tengiz to keep this information to himself. Tengiz told them he had not asked for his secret in the first place. So, the mysterious Trans-Caucasus.

The next day we visited the Botanical Park. There is no money to keep it up now, but the flora reminded me of south Florida or parts of Louisiana. Lots of

magnolia trees. Batumi in general is like south Florida, palm trees and all, plus the same air of decadence. A defunct overhead cablecar system led to the top of a small mountain where there was a hotel. Tengiz told me his father had built this hotel when he was still active. This was after his father had been wounded fighting the Germans. Now the hotel is full of refugees from Abkhaziya. This would be true of hotels in Tbilisi, too. There are nearly 300,000 refugees who have fled that part of Georgia. The Muslims were a minority in Abkhaziya, but they had been "secretly" aided by the Russian military and the security services. Now, after a devastating civil war, the minority Muslims are in charge. For a while at least. Shevardnadze said recently that if the international community will do nothing to solve this, it will have to be solved by force of arms.

Almost no one has much money nowadays in Georgia, yet when one sees all the fresh fruit and vegetables during late summer and early fall, it is hard to imagine the difficulties. Even when people in Russia were not eating very well as things fell apart, the people in Georgia ate much better. Almost half the people still live in rural areas. Before I left I had dinner with Tengiz's aunt, having been told beforehand that she was an outstanding cook. She must have served 20 dishes, all of which required lots of preparation: eggplant dishes, tomato dishes, stews, cheeses, wonderful fruit, homemade wine. I don't know why some peoples are more generous, more hospitable than others. It has nothing to do with having money. No people top the Georgians.

I left for Tbilisi before Tengiz, passing through Kutaisi and then Gori, where Stalin (Joseph Dzhugashvili) was born in 1879. I rented a room in a home a block and a half from the main street in Tbilisi, Rustaveli, named after a poet, and just two or three blocks from where the parliament met. And just in time for the bombing of Shevardnadze's car at the parliament building with him in it. People were visibly anxious about what might then happen, even though there were soon pictures of Shevardnadze talking on television with only a few visible wounds.

For natives, the last time the tanks and personnel carriers started rumbling through the streets, it was the overthrow of the newly elected first president,

Gamsakhurdia. Accused of becoming a dictator by his former schoolmate Tengiz Sigua, who had been sacked as prime minister in August, and Tengiz Kitovani, head of the National Guard, they, along with Dzhaba Ioseliani, led the attack which ousted Gamsakhurdia in December 1991, and in the process killed more than 200 people and destroyed many of the buildings along Rustaveli. Obviously everyone is very edgy. I was making my way past the Opera House on Rustaveli, headed toward the United States Embassy on some business, when a young soldier came toward me screaming in Georgian, waving his automatic weapon. There were two personnel carriers on the side of the street of the Opera where he came from. I finally figured out he was ordering me to get on the other side of the street.

Who had bombed Shevardnadze? There are many possibilities. Could have been old Gamsakhurdian followers. Could have been instigated by the Russians. Where else would so much dynamite come from, where the Russian Army controls most of the weapons? Or, it could have been the interesting figure of Dzhaba Ioseliani. At one time, the story goes, Ioseliani was a professor of theater or a playwright, but now he controls the largest paramilitary organization in Georgia, the Mkhedrioni (or Horsemen). Some called him the *capo di capos* for all criminal gangs in the country. He travels with many armed bodyguards even in Tbilisi, all with radios. Before I left Tbilisi, Shevardnadze had stripped all the bodyguards of their weapons on their way out of town, telling Ioseliani he was free to go. In the 70's, he had been sentenced to over 25 years for a series of robberies and manslaughter. In the 90's, Ioseliani had been jailed by Gamsakhurdia, but had managed to escape in time to overthrow him. Ironically, he, Sigua, and Kitovani had ultimately invited Shevardnadze to head the government, although they retained control over the military. The friendship between Shevardnadze and Ioseliani reportedly went back decades.

A few buildings on Rustaveli still show the marks of shell fire, especially a famous old hotel. But otherwise, this main street is back to normal, with just the odd personnel carrier scurrying by to live things up. Tbilisi is a very old and charming city, founded in the fourth century. This was also when Christianity came to Georgia. It pleases the Geor-

gians to remind the Russians that the former were Christian and civilized for centuries while the Russians were still barbarians. Despite Tbilisi's many pillages and occupations, the Georgian Orthodox Church has been a centripetal force. One Sunday I visited several churches, all full. Even for a visitor, being in fifth-century churches is awesome, especially while hearing a Georgian choir. The Georgian Church was heavily persecuted by the Soviet communists, and in 1951 the head of the church told an American reporter that out of 2,455 churches, only 100 were functioning. All that has changed as of 1995.

One day the accomplished painter Levan Chogoshvili was showing me contemporary paintings in several galleries, some of which had his own work. In a kind of revolt, before Georgia gained its independence, he had begun painting scenes from generations of his family life as revealed in old photographs. Such subjects had been forbidden because

they were bourgeois and even nationalistic, heaven forbid. These paintings could not be shown publicly. Levan said it was a kind of requiem for the family, some of whom had been killed by the Bolsheviks, others repressed because they might have graduated from a German university, for example, after the turn of the century and thus were suspect. He had arranged for me to meet David Aleksidze, another painter, who invited us to lunch at his apartment. Aleksidze had studied in Venice for a year, but he did not think there was much for him to learn there. After fruit and champagne he brought out very large canvases of macabre nudes, often in masks or other exotic accessories, and everything I saw was highly finished. He knew his craft. Before we left, a man in his early 20's came in, another painter and friend of them both. It turned out that he would soon be returning to study at a university in Scotland. Aleksidze smiled and said, "He's Stalin's great-grandson." I thought he was kidding. He was not. As I recall, the grandson said his greatest desire at the moment was to play the steel guitar.

Tengiz soon returned from Batumi and invited me to take a ride on the funicular up St. David's Mountain where I could have the best view of the city. There were a couple of limousines parked at the base. When Tengiz asked about them, he was told the former king of Georgia was visiting at the top. We did not see him but instead we went inside a huge restaurant that had been gutted by shell fire. I had seen this building all lit up at night from my room below. Beria, also a Georgian and Stalin's head of security, a terrible man, had it built. Oddly, amidst all the rubble there was a folkloric triptich by a 20th-century painter, full of a crowd of citizens of Tbilisi, including the painter. It had been spared.

Halfway down the mountain, we got off the funicular and walked to St. David's church and cemetery. This is a kind of pantheon of important Georgian heroes, statesmen, scholars, and artists. Tengiz ticked off the names of famous poets and educators as we passed their graves, and then casually remarked, "Here's Stalin's mother."

Georgia has always had a fascination for Russians. Tolstoy wrote the first and second drafts of *Childhood* while he stayed in a German suburb of Tbilisi and received medical treatment for a recur-

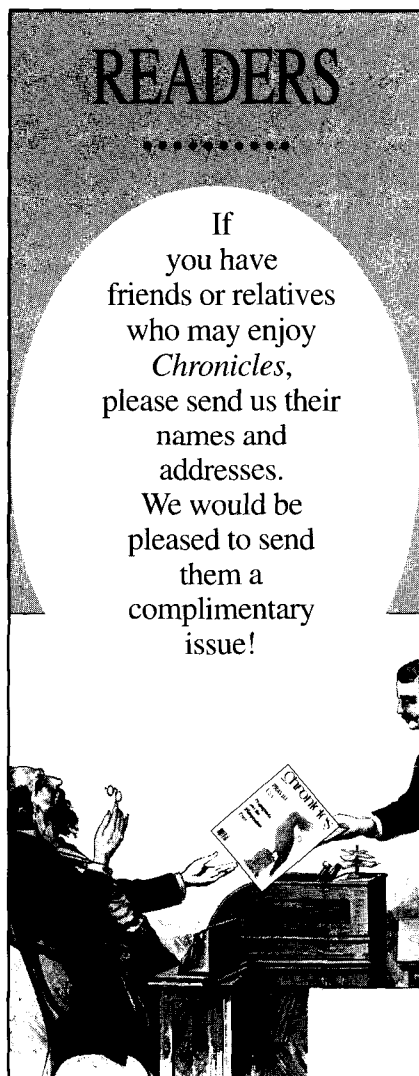
ring dose of clap. Gorky and Pushkin also visited. One Georgian described the Russian love affair with Georgia in this way: it's like a drunk husband married to a beautiful woman, and the husband cries that he loves her and cannot live without her, and then gives her a sound thrashing.

Ever since I read Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time* and his description of the Caucasus Mountains and the Georgian Military Road, I had wanted to visit. Tengiz introduced me to Zaal Kikodze, a slender, bearded man, who is an archaeologist by profession and mountain climber by avocation. Zaal has been doing some very exciting research along with Professor Reid Ferring of the University of North Texas in the paleoarchaeology of Georgia. The artifacts he has discovered appear to be 1.5 to 1.8 million years old, thus pushing the usual date of man moving out of Africa.

Zaal agreed to take me along this historic highway in his four-wheel drive vehicle all the way to Kazbegi. On the way we stopped at Mtskheta, one of the oldest towns in the world still inhabited, and the ancient capital of the kingdom. In the general area is a burial ground from the Iron Age. The most striking aspect of Mtskheta is the great cathedral, Sveitskhoveli (the Life-giving Pillar), built in the 11th century, I believe, destroyed by Tamerlane and his merry men, then rebuilt in the 15th century.

The trip along the Aragvi River, then climbing almost 8,000 feet to Krestovi (or Djirari) Pass, then down the divide to the town of Kazbegi is worth the whole trip to Georgia. At the pass, we stop to look up and down the valley, the dizzyingly beautiful, small villages at the bottom, whereupon a group of Georgian men eating and drinking vodka insist that we have a drink with them, this at nine in the morning. We continue on our journey, and before the descent we see farmers cutting hay with hand scythes in the meadows. At one point Zaal gets out where a small stream crosses the road. The melting snow red with iron oxide becomes a small waterfall, and he catches a drink of the famous mineral water, while others who have stopped fill their bottles. Now on the other side of the divide, the river that accompanies us is the Terek.

Before we get to the town of Kazbegi, Zaal points out Mt. Kazbegi. What a mountain! Sixteen thousand five hundred fifty-four feet from sea level, 11,000



feet from the valley floor. For the Greeks, the Caucasian Mountains were probably the limit of the known world. This area has given them numerous mythical stories, that of Jason and the Golden Fleece down by the coast, that of the Amazons, and here on Mt. Kazbegi, the story of Prometheus. A Caucasian myth reveals a character, Amirani, and a plot with many points of similarity to the Promethean one.

In Kazbegi, Zaal talks with his friend, a famous hunter who finds the antlered animals that furnish the Georgians with their drinking "horns." Afterward we climb around lateral cuts in the valley, loafing in alpine meadows, then descend to travel through the Darial Gorge cut by the Terek, and up to the Russian border. There is a no-man's-land between the Georgian and Russian border stations, and there, while we munched on *shashlik*, we watched a huge load of cigarettes being transferred from one big truck to several small ones. The Georgian owner does not want to risk taking his big truck and load across the border and having them seized. All of this business is what is called "semi-legal."

Back in Tbilisi later in the week, I attend a birthday party for one of Professor Alexander Rondeli's students in international relations at Tbilisi State University. I talk with Professor Rondeli about Georgia's past and especially about its future. Like Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary to the west, Georgia, along with the whole Transcaucasus, is trapped between a rock and a hard spot. Russia wants the area as a buffer between Iran or Turkey. As these great powers have waxed and waned over many centuries, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan get waxed in the process. On the question of the immediate future, Rondeli said two things needed to happen. Shevardnadze, having survived the bomb blast, needed to survive the November election (which he did with a 70 percent majority) and the moderates needed to win the December elections in Russia. If ever the extreme nationalists should rise to power, there will be even more mysterious bombings, with the goal of creating instability, the reality and the image, thus discouraging joint Georgian-foreign business ventures, and thus denying a strong, independent Georgia. For example, an oil pipeline from the Caspian Sea through Georgia is in the works. Russian nationalists do not want this. In November, a major power line was mysteriously

blown up. All of this is to say, "See, the country is unstable."

As of this writing, with 40 percent of the December vote counted, the communists have made advances, leading all other parties with 22 percent of the votes cast. Zyuganov's communists are indistinguishable from Zhirinovskiy's (whose party captured 11 percent of the vote) in their demand for a restored Soviet Union ("the historic fatherland"). This does not bode well for Georgia. Georgians will be looking anxiously at the coming June election for Russian president.

There are many reasons for Americans to go to Georgia: the Black Sea beaches, the spectacular mountains for trekking and climbing, the archaeology, the food and wine. In Tbilisi, painting and music reflect a high degree of sophistication. There are some interesting opportunities for risk capital. For more of that to happen, Russia just needs to let the Georgians mind their own business. Meeting the people is the best reason for visiting. No people surpass the Georgians in hospitality. Go and you will return. I know I will.

William Mills is a novelist and poet whose latest work of fiction is Properties of Blood (University of Arkansas Press).

Letter From Virginia

by Mark G. Malvasi

Arthur Ashe Lives



As widely reported last year, a statue of Arthur Ashe has joined those of the Confederate heroes that grace Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. Were the issue only, or even principally, the desire of Richmonders to commemorate the life and accomplishments of their native son, the proposed memorial would have excited little debate. But these days, even the dead are subjected to political bickering and intrigue.

Controversy surfaced not about whether to erect a statue to honor Ashe, which for most residents was acceptable and even desirable, but rather about

where to put it. Inevitably, attention focused on Monument Avenue. Anticipating and, indeed, welcoming a showdown, the national media responded with predictable glee. The juxtaposition of evil Confederates and offended blacks was apparently too delicious for most of them to overlook. Would the citizens of Richmond cling thoughtlessly to an outworn and vicious racism, pundits wondered, or would they open their minds and hearts to "racial healing"—whatever that is—put aside their resentment, and embrace at least the conciliation of black and white?

But the emphasis on racial antagonism, which in fairness some city officials tried to downplay, obscured the real story, and not only from worthies in the media. With the *vox populi* still ringing in their ears, the Richmond City Council voted seven to zero, with one absentee and one abstention, to place the statue of Ashe on Monument Avenue. Afterward the members strained muscles congratulating themselves for their courageous support of democracy in action. Mayor Leonidas B. Young, who had initially suggested two alternate locations for the statue, proclaimed that "I am proud of this City Council, because you have dared to do what others have failed to do. You have listened to the people of this city." The council had heard the voice of the people, and the people had declared in favor of placing the statue of Arthur Ashe on Monument Avenue. Or had they?

According to a poll that Media General Research conducted, only 22 percent of the people in Richmond, Chesterfield, and Henrico and Hanover counties favored the Monument Avenue location. Sixty-four percent favored another site. Among blacks, 41 percent preferred Monument Avenue and 59 percent wanted the statue erected elsewhere. In the city of Richmond proper, fully 67 percent *opposed* situating the statue anywhere along Monument Avenue. Without a doubt, had the proposal gone to a popular referendum, it would have suffered a stunning defeat even among blacks.

The dispute over the location of the Ashe monument did not reflect the democratic convictions or instincts of a free people. Instead, it offered another instance of demagoguery in which leaders flattered and deceived their constituents, to say nothing of appealing to their worst fears, prejudices, and hatreds,

all to curry favor and maintain power. These tactics, I should add, had nothing to do with whether a statue of Arthur Ashe eventually ended up somewhere on Monument Avenue, or whether he merited a place there. For most partisans, that objective and that consideration were secondary or irrelevant, a mere pretext that enabled them to exploit the situation for their own ends, to provoke a confrontation with their antagonists, or to enhance their own visibility and status within the community.

Nor did these schemes convey anything about Ashe himself. For although they were allegedly implemented in his name, Ashe, whatever his vulnerabilities and foibles, was by all accounts affable, diffident, refined, contemplative, and brave—just the sort of fellow for whom politics holds no attraction. But this scrambling for political crumbs had everything to do with the corruption of American civilization, which in micro-

cosm it exhibited.

Modern democracy has failed so spectacularly because, among other things, it encourages self-indulgence. In this case, the politicians were not even concerned to appease the will of the majority, for which they showed a callous disregard. Instead, they pandered to a narrow strata of opinion among a determined, vocal, and powerful minority—in other words, a faction—and represented it as democracy. To justify their decision they then spoke of its “moral correctness,” and invoked “symbolic” rather than “popular” reasons for supporting the placement of the statue along Monument Avenue. But the final choice of location rightfully belonged to all the citizens of Richmond, not to a select few, and certainly not to a City Council accustomed to settling disputes and solving problems by legislative fiat. So much for democracy. So much for government by consent.

Those who wanted the statue of

Arthur Ashe on Monument Avenue complained that their opponents, men and women who stubbornly continued to admire the Confederacy, could not or would not let go of the past. But it is insecurity and hatred, not love, that make people obsessive about getting their own way, pressing their particular worldview, and assailing, discrediting, silencing, punishing, or eliminating their enemies. Those who wanted the statue of Arthur Ashe on Monument Avenue got it. To their delight and satisfaction, 130 years after the fact, the last Confederate stronghold in Virginia has been broken. But in their zeal to accomplish this purpose, they unwittingly disclosed why remembering the Confederate dead is so important, and why we forget them at our peril.

Mark G. Malvasi teaches history at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia.

THE WISDOM OF THE PLANNED GIFT



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IMMIGRATION

Welfareniks of the World Unite

by Don Barnett

Yuri Petrov (not his real name) immigrated to America from the Soviet Union ten years ago. Now Yuri wants his mother to move to America, but there is one problem. His mother doesn't want to leave her life and the rest of her family behind in Russia. Tired of sending money every month to Moscow for his mother's support, Yuri needs to promote the idea that life would be better for his mother here in the United States. Consider the inducements he can offer his mother to immigrate. First, there is the \$440 monthly payment called a "pension" in the Russian-speaking immigrant community. This is better known as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the indigent elderly and the disabled. Yuri's mother would be eligible for SSI 30 days after arrival. Between 1983 and 1993, usage of SSI by elderly United States citizens actually declined by 25 percent while the number of noncitizen immigrants receiving SSI quadrupled. Yuri's mother could live with her son and keep this entitlement even though her son's family income exceeds \$100,000, or, as mother and son prefer, she could set up housekeeping on her own in a public housing project where nearly all the residents are recent arrivals from the former Soviet Union. There she could get Food Stamps and receive subsidized meals prepared under federal senior nutrition programs. As one staffer at a federally funded agency to help the new arrivals explains, "We plead family reunification in order to immigrate, but promptly split up on arrival to increase the benefits stream." Once established in America, mother can return for visits with her other children at the family

dacha outside Moscow for six months each year without losing her entitlement to benefits in the United States.

If this isn't enough, Yuri hopes the promise of practically free lifetime medical care will clinch the deal. Medicaid alone carries an \$8,000 annual value on average for the elderly, and by some reports the usage of Medicaid is much higher than average among immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Two physicians scandalized the immigrant community by going public in the Russian-language press about Medicaid and Medicare fraud in the community. According to them, the United States government is paying for a lot of nonexistent home oxygen machines and wheelchairs in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn (a Soviet-American colony). In a series of articles entitled "How Our Immigrants Rob Medicare and Medicaid," the physicians claim that "tons" of medicine obtained fraudulently through Medicaid and Medicare circulate on the black market in Moscow. The physicians, who treat the émigré community, report that their average Medicaid/Medicare patient generates not the usual \$4,000 to \$8,000 in charges to the government, but more than \$35,000 each year. Creative uses of Medicaid services have given rise to comical regulations. For instance, when auditors realized Medicaid was paying for shopping trips to Brighton Beach in ambulettes, a decree went out forbidding the transport of clients with shopping bags in the publicly supported vehicles. An ambulette ride from Queens to a "clinic" in neighboring Brooklyn generates a bill to Medicaid of \$47. According to New York City documents cited by the physicians, former Soviets own about half of the ambulette services in Brooklyn. Yuri's mother, like most of the new arrivals, would not knowingly engage in outright fraud, but abuse of the system is not an isolated problem. As one of the physicians states: "Any pensioner in Brighton Beach would be glad to show how to get all you could ever need using your Medicare or Medicaid card."

Were the House Republican welfare reform bill to pass today, very little of this benefit analysis would change. For Yuri is considered a *refugee* by United States

law, and his mother would be joining him as a refugee. Refugees are exempt from the cuts proposed in welfare for other immigrants. That exemption remains in effect for refugees for six years after arrival, that is, until they become eligible for citizenship. Upon naturalization, eligibility for benefits continues on the same basis as it would for any American citizen. None of the welfare programs noted above are subject to a usage limit. Senior nutrition programs are not even means-tested and will remain that way under the proposed changes. (When Donald Trump turns 65, he can get Meals on Wheels if he wishes.) AFDC, the program on which legislators are determined to show their resolve, is about one-ninth the cost of the various welfare programs Yuri's mother will have a lifetime entitlement to as soon as she arrives. (SSI alone exceeds the total of state and federal costs for AFDC.)

A recent Health and Human Services study of refugees from the former Soviet Union who arrived between 1988 and 1993 (about 250,000) found 59.7 percent of the group to be receiving food stamps and about half to be Medicaid recipients. Twenty-two percent of refugee households in the five-year study group live in public housing, and an astonishing 28 percent of all households in the group have one or more members receiving cash assistance through SSI. The Russian-language press often criticizes "Welfarechiks" whom a reporter describes as "transported to the phantasmagoric 'bright future' of socialism . . . they live in little Odessas, Leningrads, and Moscovs distinguished from the originals by the fact that the stores are full and housing, food and medical care really *are* free."

While much of the United States budget is finally being examined by the public, the cost of refugee support has been ignored by the media and politicians alike. Yet, if public assistance charges for ongoing refugee support at the local, state, and federal levels are added to direct resettlement costs, it is likely that the *yearly* cost of the refugee program exceeds our entire 1994 foreign aid budget of \$13.5 billion. That's assuming average per-recipient costs, not the hypercosts of fraud. Most of this is

due to refugees from earlier waves, principally from Southeast Asia. But the migration from the former Soviet Union began relatively recently, and as the exodus continues, the yearly cost of the program can only go up. Watch for the refugee industry's campaign to "privatize" the resettlement process. It has nothing to do with limiting access to public assistance and requiring sponsors to foot more of the bill. This privatization campaign is about diverting more federal funds to "private" agencies whose main function is walking the new arrivals through the red tape of public assistance. The partially taxpayer-funded agency for ex-Soviets in New York, with a staff of 550, is already the size of a small government bureau.

One might argue that taxes paid by working refugees cover the costs of dependent refugees. If a system could be devised to direct to Yuri's mother every dollar paid by her son in taxes and retirement contributions, there probably would be more than enough to cover the expenses. This is the methodology followed in a recent Urban Institute study purporting to show that all immigrants as a group "put into" the system \$30 billion more than they "take out." This logic works quite well for those who believe that a night at the theater should cost only the price of the popcorn. Unfortunately, as taxpayers we have obligations other than assistance programs. If the Urban Institute's measure for balancing what is "put in" versus what is "taken out" were declared the standard for all United States taxpayers, we would be running a deficit well in excess of a trillion dollars each year.

But why should economics be a factor for refugees whose numbers, at any rate, are insignificant in the overall picture? In recent years about one in seven legal immigrants has been a refugee. The Jordan Commission has recommended refugee admissions of 50,000 a year—less than half the recent rate of admissions. But there is little evidence that legislators or the administration, which sets the yearly refugee quota, will be able to resist domestic pressure politics and the emotion that comes with the very mention of the term "refugee." "Everything they once had has been destroyed or taken away, probably at gunpoint. Home, family, possessions, all gone," according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

When Yuri's mother arrives, she will

be joining about 40,000 refugees from the former Soviet Union alone. Almost none of the immigrants comes from the population of two million actually identified by the UNHCR as refugees in and among the former republics.

Don Barnett writes on immigration for numerous national publications.

F I L M

Bond and Betrayal

by Wayne Allensworth

Goldeneye

*Produced by Michael G. Wilson
and Barbara Broccoli*

Directed by Martin Campbell

*Screenplay by Jeffrey Caine
and Bruce Feirstein*

Released by United Artists

In the best of the James Bond films derived directly from the novels of Ian Fleming—*Dr. No*, *From Russia With Love*, *Goldfinger*, and *Thunderball*—Sean Connery was able to evoke the gentlemanly, but roguish, quality of the British "clubland" heroes like Richard Hannay and Bulldog Drummond who had helped inspire 007's creator, while adding a hard-edged brutality to the character's persona that was rarely seen in the clean-limbed protagonists of an earlier time. Fleming, like Conan Doyle, had brought to life a character who seemed real, however improbable his adventures, to the reading and filmgoing public. Like Fleming's creation, Connery, tongue firmly in cheek, faced the most unlikely of villains with a sense of amused irony, but was nevertheless able to lend a seriousness to the role that seemed more realistic to an audience that had witnessed world war, Stalin, Hitler, and Hiroshima. The early Bond films, like postwar *film noir* or "adult" Westerns, suited an era that did not require that its heroes be Boy Scouts, but was not yet prepared for the amoral antihero that Clint Eastwood would soon popularize in his squint-and-kill

"spaghetti Westerns." Stallone's and Schwarzenegger's superhuman antics are probably a carryover from the Bond films, particularly the exaggerated self-parody of the Roger Moore years, but the tight-lipped Terminator-style killing in *Rambo* or *Commando* is a spinoff of the cold-bloodedness of Eastwood's 45-toting angel of death. Bond still has a code, a rough one, to be sure, like that of John Wayne's Western heroes of the 50's, whose behavior would have hardly passed muster with Roy or Hopalong, but one that still retains some sense of honor. Bond is a killer, but not a murderer.

In the latest installment of the Bond saga, the Harry Saltzman-Albert Broccoli team's successors (Barbara Broccoli keeps the Bond property all in the family) have wisely chosen to continue moving the series away from the cartoonish style of the 70's and mid-80's by casting the worthy Pierce Brosnan as Bond. Brosnan, in view of his pretty-boy days on television's *Remington Steele*, retains the attractive combination of irony and ruthlessness that Connery created and that Shakespearean actor Timothy Dalton brought back to the Bond character in *The Living Daylights* (1987), after the foppish Moore had made the image of Bond as finely tuned commando impossible to believe. Nobody wanted to be Moore's Bond. If Brosnan is not let down by the production team, he may be successful in keeping the Bond franchise a going concern in the 90's, for it is the film's production failures that almost scuttle the Brosnan ship on her maiden voyage.

The film is poorly edited. The chase scenes drag on far longer than necessary, and Bond himself is almost lost amid countless helicopter crashes, train wrecks, and car chases that are hard to follow—just who is pursuing whom, and just where is Bond in this cacophony of explosions, squealing tires, and gunfire? Even during the bone-crunching fistfight sequence between Bond and his archenemy, another touch evocative of early Bond films, particularly the Sean Connery-Robert Shaw brawl in *From Russia With Love*, it is difficult for the viewer to make out just what is going on. The production team needs to tighten up a bit and reduce the crash-'em-ups to a manageable number and scale instead of trying to keep the teenagers interested.

The story and screenwriting team save

the day by playing to the best in the early films (perhaps the best scene in *Goldeneye* is Bond's hilarious visit with the venerable "Q," once again played by veteran Desmond Llewellyn), creating engaging villains, and by giving this Bond film a theme, something entirely new to the series. Xenia Onatopp, played with over-the-top gusto by Famke Janssen, is one part Pussy Galore and one part Oddjob, a *femme fatale* who has it in for Bond, and who has an interesting style of dispatching the male flies caught in her web—Sharon Stone or Glenn Close never did in a lover like this! Alex Trevelyan, played by Sean Bean, is an ex-00 colleague of Bond's who double-crosses his former friend, with a mind to revenge against England herself, the country Trevelyan blames for his parents' deaths. In the Fleming novels, Bond was sometimes troubled by the ruthlessness of his profession, and the loneliness it required. Loyalty, for loyalty was everything to Fleming's Bond, and a taste for danger kept 007 on the job. Not only is this the first Bond film to make use of that ambiguity, it is the first to develop a thematic underbelly. The theme is betrayal. Bond's former colleague is actually the son of anti-Soviet Russians who, having found themselves in the hands of the British at the end of World War II, were promptly and forcibly returned to Stalin's Russia to face a firing squad. This is the first instance I know of that mention of forcible repatriations by the Allies has been made in the context of popular culture, which is reason enough to congratulate the screenwriters.

On the other hand, I don't know what the Russians will make of this film when a bootlegged video version turns up in the Land of the Firebird. For years the Soviets harped on the image of 007 as anti-Soviet, pro-capitalist propaganda. They seemed barely to notice that the films *never* pitted Bond against SMERSH, the Soviets' professional hitmen who were among Fleming's favorite Bond antagonists. During the Cold War, Western filmmakers just couldn't bring themselves to use the Soviets as bad guys, but now that the Cold War is over, the film's opening sequence, a flashback in this case, has Bond battling the minions of an undoubtedly Evil Empire. Moreover, *all* of this post-Cold War Bond's bad guys are Russians, either gangsters, computer geeks, or anti-Western military officers, and Bond dispatches noncommunist Russian soldiers as if it

were the mid-50's. That, along with the film's admission of postwar chicanery by the Allies, and the creeping suspicion among all Russians that the West really is infected with "Russophobia," may make *Goldeneye* a favorite of the "red-browns," who, communist or not, have always told Russians that the West cannot be trusted.

Wayne Allensworth writes from
Purcellville, Virginia.

PUBLISHING

The Wonderful World of Porn

by Egon Richard Tausch

So you thought writing hard-core pornography was an easy way to earn a living? You remembered your adolescence and those turgid paperbacks in which the vocabulary was strictly four-letter, the plot rambling and forgotten halfway through the book, and the characters' names changed periodically as though some of the chapters were lifted bodily from other books? You always suspected that these novels were the first literature produced entirely by computer? Well, you were wrong.

Yes, Virginia, there are real humans turning out such classics as *Teacher Gets Taught*, *High School for Nymphos*, and *Dating Daddy*. Names, of course, are changed to protect the guilty. The big porn publishers in New York and California like to hint that their stable (apt term, that) of writers includes a few serious authors who choose to relax with occasional well-written fantasies, which are ascribed to such fictional creators as "Rod Strong," "Fanny Fawn," and "I.M. Willing."

Although amateurs are encouraged to contribute their manuscripts—the publishers enjoy deflowering new writers as much as their fictional characters enjoy deflowering each other—there are rules. Hard-core pornography is a discipline. You can't just let it all hang out. One of the biggest porn publishers in New York

advises new authors that they should write about "interesting characters in highly erotic situations." The main character *must* be female, since the books are geared toward the male market. As this publisher helpfully advises new writers in his pamphlet, "Perhaps the theme could be a sexual problem of some sort which is being experienced by the main character and other characters; and the denouement a solution to that problem."

The "problem" or "solution" need not be sociologically examined; pornography is no longer scrutinized by judges for "redeeming social value." The day is past when the first chapter of every such book discussed science, the development of social mores, and the dangers inherent in the Puritan ethic, only to lascivate over improbable sexual encounters for the next 20 chapters. Nowadays they get down and dirty right away.

The above-mentioned New York publisher also kindly outlines acceptable "problems": "Incest—this sexual fantasy can involve any combination of family members . . . Nymphos . . . Age Differentiations . . . Career Girls—stories involving the heroine in a career setting (e.g. teacher, nurse, secretary, model . . . the possibilities are endless) . . ." Not quite endless. Female career stereotypes live on in pornography; the publisher is not interested in the sexual exploits of over-sexed lady truck drivers or executives. If these books are a good indication of what men consider sexy, then feminism is doomed. If, on the other hand, women construction workers are as alluring to men as feminists say they should be, the word hasn't gotten to porn publishers. "Virgins—the sexual initiation of a teenage girl leading to the emergence of a nympho . . . Straying Spouse . . . Swapping . . . Orgies . . . Domination—this should mainly be of psychological nature; although mild bondage and discipline are acceptable."

If you're thinking that these categories exhaust the possibilities, you're wrong. Morality lives (at least with this publisher). "We *cannot* consider the following themes: male homosexuality, excretion, child molestation, bestiality, violent sado-masochism, murder as part of a sex act." Finally, "All characters involved sexually must be at least *fifteen* years of age." The largest publisher in California is less prudish. Manuscripts featuring male homosexuality are happily accepted. (But science fiction, mystery, and satire of any sort are barred.)

Interracial sex is also prohibited. (Would you want your son to marry a colored boy?) There seems to be no objection to interspecies sex. Novels must have "a minimum of 50 percent erotic action. (We prefer evenly spaced, five-to-ten-page sex scenes.)" They must also contain four-letter words in dialogue and narrative. ("Never use medical, anatomical, or euphemistic terms.") Keep it simple, stupid. And enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The result of all this careful screening is a typically thin (150-page) volume with a crude but suggestive line drawing on the cover. On page one, the female lead is described, and her passionate desires hinted at. By page three, she begins a ten-page intimate encounter with a total stranger. Curious friends and neighbors then proceed to drop in on the busy couple, followed by mailmen, peddlers, and meter-readers. By page 75, the plot is abandoned, and the remainder of the book consists of unrelated sexual incidents lovingly, if confusingly, described. Heroines are all large-breasted, sexually uncontrolled, slightly masochistic, and foul-mouthed. Heroes all well-endowed, supremely confident, slightly sadistic, and foul-mouthed.

Judging from the paltry \$500 fee paid the average author, there might be some justice in the popular conception of the writers as strange introverts moldering in garrets. No such stereotype holds for the publishers, though. Clean, modern offices, with a young and pretty receptionist who smiles sweetly at you and inquires about your specialty. If you can answer her without embarrassment, you're in. "Most of our editors and paid readers are women," boasts one managing editor. "They're more articulate, and open to new ideas." You watch several lady typists replying to hopeful inquiries, and preparing reader reports. "This writer doesn't have enough explicit action. His people talk too much before getting down to business." Signed "Maryanne." "The hero (or the writer) is too much of a prig. He doesn't even know how to do it." Signed Susan. The ultimate rejection slip.

"You'd think that every sickie in the world would be sending us reeking, slimy manuscripts," says the editor. "Actually, most of them are too tame. Or repetitious, unimaginative. They can't seem to get the juiciest of their fantasies on paper. Maybe they're still ashamed of their thoughts."

I can't imagine why.

Egon Richard Tausch is an attorney in San Antonio, Texas.

EUROPE

Left and Right in Eastern Europe

by Thomas Molnar

Not much can be understood about the new role of the political left and right in Eastern Europe without taking into account two fundamental factors, generally ignored by both critical and enthusiastic observers of the post-1990 years. One is the historic trauma of the five-century-old division of Europe into two halves, effected by the Turkish occupation before and after the year 1500. It interrupted the Renaissance, and while the West cultivated its art, science, institutions, and law, development stopped in the devastated East. The "two Europes" remained essentially separate, and the separation was reinforced—and this is the second factor—along the same line drawn at Yalta. For example, Vienna, which the Turks were unable to take *then*, remained also outside the Soviet orbit. From the Baltic to the Adriatic, the line of division is a geopolitical reality as well as a cultural barricade on whose two sides concepts and ideals do not possess the same meaning.

Two such concepts are the *right* and the *left*. In the West today, both concepts manifest themselves in a tamed form, the left as social-democratic, the right as liberal-conservative. There is hardly any difference between the two positions, between Clinton and Chirac, except the label: both policies are shaped by industrial imperatives and vague aspirations toward unity. For Clinton, the New World Order; for Chirac, the continent shaped in Brussels. In the West, the left has lost its utopian drive since Moscow's collapse, while the right denies any continuity with the recent past: Le Pen with Maurrassian nationalism,

Fini with fascism and the Movimiento Sociale Italiano, and the Alleanza Populare with the Franco years.

The taming of political concepts in the West has no genuine counterpart in Eastern Europe, where the brutal antagonisms are now camouflaged but still visible beneath the politically correct labels. This is because left and right have deep, blood-soiled roots; and since they are only superficially economic in nature and in reality national-cultural, they are sturdy, hardly changing. Yet the will to escape from decades of communism is such a basic, popular thrust from Riga to Sarajevo that neither left nor right wishes to think of Marxism. Nominally, at least, both embrace democracy, plurality of parties, and the free market, although this stance is not dictated by conviction but by Western pressure. At any rate, here the similarity ends; the two positions do not even dream of a synthesis. All told, the fundamental motives have remained much the same as they were before 1948, the year of communist takeover.

The leftist believes that the Marxist "experiment" was not all negative, and the intellectual echo from the West does not contradict this view. In spite of the Reagan/Thatcher years, the Western intelligentsia has hardly modified its *Weltanschauung*; its utopian substantum has survived, and the intellectuals grant their favors to the Eastern European left, not to the right, which they equate with fascism. Proof of this is that no clamor for a "Nuremberg trial" followed liberation. The West opposed or ignored the case for such a tribunal on national levels, and the local potentates, the *nomenclatura*, understandably resisted it. Thus the rightist protest over this scandalous impunity died out: the constantly deepening economic troubles distracted people's attention toward daily survival.

The left now pays lip service to pluralism, conforms to the multiparty system, and enters coalitions. Is this a temporary mask, a series of smart moves? At any rate, regardless of slogans and tactics, what takes place is not the kind of ideological taming familiar in Western politics, since "democratization" has hardly taken place in the public areas. In fact, it has remained superficial, a set of slogans, a key word for all players, good only to reassure Western circles about the "change" that followed the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

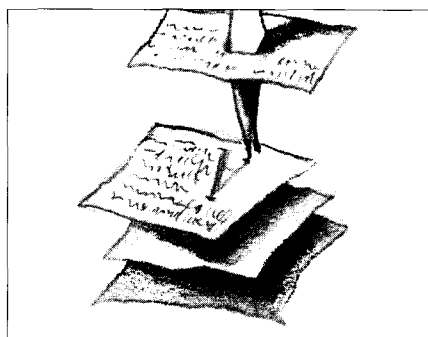
Keep in mind that the intellectual

prestige of the left, which has produced such thinkers as Georg Lukacs, Antonio Gramsci, Ernst Bloch, and Milovan Djilas, no matter what direction their evolution eventually took, still bolsters Marxist intellectual respectability abroad and prestige at home, since they represent a thin vanguard of urban intelligentsia in Eastern Europe's largely agrarian societies. Their successors, often their very students, now of mature age and originating from the same narrow intellectual caste, contribute to the liberal course as if it were the logical and ideological sequel to a more experienced, wiser Marxism. In short, the ex-Marxist intellectuals have effected all over Eastern Europe a skillful transition to what the West likes to believe is social democracy. It continues recruiting on the left and is reckoned as an indispensable partner in any conceivable coalition. The bridges it has built (many of them still under the dying "old regime," in fact with the party's complicity, even encouragement) to Western liberal and social democratic circles now earn generous funds and free propaganda. Thus the left has emerged as a trusted partner of the West.

The right, on the other hand, is now relegated to the backwaters. For the Marxist left, the right used to be the enemy, but it is now a mere remnant, at most an impediment to "modernization." What is the *right*, anyway? Like its Western cousins, the right in Eastern Europe is dubbed "extremist." At best, it is regarded as a nuisance for its opposition to the two great options of the century, represented by Moscow in the past, by Washington now. Rightists are seen as agents of anticulture since they reject modernity. Encouraging public opinion to accept this version of things are the elections proving that the right has only minimal support. Only in Russia does the traditional right command respect and gather votes, since there is an army, a veritable state within the state: the *ultima ratio* of the right in modern times. But in the countries we speak about, such an institution hardly exists, or it vegetates in a state of demoralized anarchy. The military is told to wait for better days and better pay—when it will be integrated into NATO.

The spectacular showing of the left in recent elections elicits several remarks. First, the political atmosphere is overheated because the right finds no expression, although, paradoxically, it is closer to these nations' tradition and general

character. Lech Walesa, as the recently ousted president of Poland, Bishop Laszlo Tokes, who ignited the anti-Ceausescu uprising in Transylvania, and Jozsef Antall, the first Hungarian prime minister (1990-1993), were nationalist and Christian and nearly cult figures in the eyes of their respective nations. In this sense, the leftist electoral success may seem, in the long run, fragile and ephemeral. The voters seem to be aware that a rightist government cannot count on Western support, although they will quickly find out that a leftist regime is not much better situated in this respect. When this truth sinks in—and "united Europe" displays all its Western selfishness—the voters may reposition themselves.



Secondly, the suppressed national energies may find an outlet through a *nationalist left*. In ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere, a hard-pressed left, communist or otherwise, reformulates its collective consciousness (the case of Stalin in the "great patriotic war") and rediscovers the meaning and discourse of past sacrifice. The right, deceived so many times by its own weak or derelict leadership, may not remain insensitive to these themes. Between the two world wars, nationalism was a monopoly of the right; why should it not become a leftist cause?

This picture is not very different from the 1930's, except that the right/left lineup tilted then toward fascism with a strong social content. Today, it tilts toward a not quite definable leftism, perhaps in the experimental stage. But should a conflict spread over Eastern Europe, a situation impossible to isolate, say a war between a newly prepotent Russia and the Ukraine, or between Rumania and Hungary over Transylvania, we doubtless would see a realignment of left and right.

Thomas Mohr's Philosophical Grounds (1991) was just rereleased by Transaction Publishers as Archetypes of Thought.

CRIME

Age and Criminality

by Ernest van den Haag

Although crime has become a major social problem, we could vanquish it without curtailing the liberties of law-abiding citizens, without mistreating suspects or convicts, and without added cost. The only major obstacle is the inertia of legislators.

Over half of the convicts now in prison are younger than 29 years old. Only six percent are older than 45. These uncontested data lead, or should lead, to the following policy: anyone convicted for the third time of a nontrivial offense, or convicted for the second time of a violent crime, should be kept in prison until he is 45 years of age. Regardless of age, he also should be imprisoned for no fewer than five years (more if the gravity of his crime demands it).

Statistics and common sense tell us that a defendant, when convicted a third time, usually has committed more than three crimes. After all, offenders are unlikely to be caught and convicted each time they violate the law. Most commit many crimes before landing in jail. In any case, a third conviction confirms that the defendant is bent on crime as a career and is not discouraged by convictions and penalizations. A second conviction for an act of unlawful violence indicates at the least that the defendant remains dangerous despite previous punishment. However, according to the statistics, at age 45 most convicts give up criminal activities. They are rehabilitated by their years. It makes good sense, therefore, for those repeatedly convicted to be confined until, at 45, age deactivates them.

We already take age into account when punishing young offenders. But we do so perversely. We minimize the confinement of youthful offenders. If under age 18, they quite often escape punishment altogether. When they become legal adults, young criminals usually are dealt with leniently as first offenders, despite juvenile records (which are officially sealed). Even youth-

ful murderers often are punished lightly. Thus those most likely to commit further felonies are also those most likely to be released early. Crime would certainly diminish and become manageable if we confined young offenders bent on becoming career criminals until, at age 45, they are likely to give up crime.

Won't imprisonment until age 45 be too harsh for young criminals? Many perhaps did not know what they were doing; shouldn't we try to reform rather than punish them? Unfortunately, except for age, nothing has rehabilitated criminals in significant numbers. As for not knowing what they were doing, in our system nobody can be convicted unless the court finds, one, that he did what he did intentionally; two, knew that it was wrong; and, three, could have avoided the crime. The offender must have volunteered to risk punishment if he is to be convicted. Convicts therefore cannot complain when what they intentionally risked actually happens. If one knowingly and voluntarily takes a chance, he can-

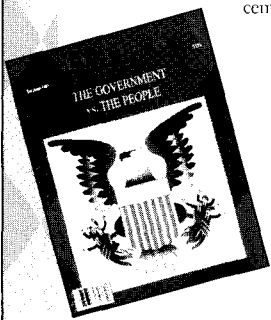
not object if what he decided to risk actually occurs.

Might it be too expensive to keep recidivist criminals in prison until age 45? Actually, it costs society less than the crimes committed when they are released before age 45. Also, politicians have unnecessarily inflated the cost of imprisonment. Do we really need prison gyms? Baseball fields? Cable TV? Most nonconvicts do without. More important, prisoners are not expected to work, apart from household chores and busy-work. Unskilled prisoners, even if expected to stay for a long time, seldom have a chance to acquire legitimate and profitable skills. Skilled prisoners seldom are given a chance to use their skills. This is scarcely in the social interest. Factories should become part of all prisons. With sufficient incentive pay, prisoners will volunteer for work. (Those who don't should not be compelled.) Inmate workers should retain significant earnings after taxes and payments for room and board have been deducted. Except

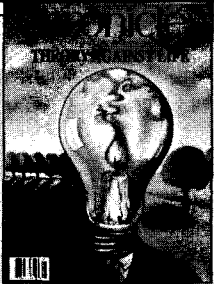
for high-security prisons, correctional institutions should be able to make a profit by selling their products to government agencies at market prices. To be sure, some unions and businessmen oppose prison labor largely because in the past, prisoners were not paid prevailing wages while prison products were sold at below-market prices. Appropriate reorganization can change all this and make prison labor profitable for both inmates and society. We should not pursue schemes that defeat the punitive and protective purpose of confinement, such as work release, furloughs, and conjugal visits. But prison factories are consistent with all the purposes of confinement and helpful alike to prisoners and taxpayers.

Ernest van den Haag writes from New York City. New editions of his Punishing Criminals and The Jewish Mystique were recently released by the University Press of America.

GREAT TOPICS, GREAT ISSUES

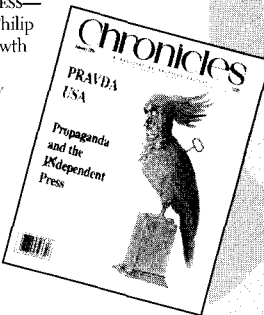


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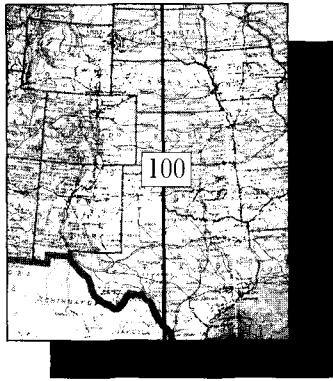
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Twelve Westerners?

"The Sahara of the Bozart," more than anything else Mencken wrote about the South, won him the undying hatred of the former Confederacy and its spokesmen. The essay, which first appeared in 1917 as a newspaper column and was subsequently expanded for inclusion in the next volume of the *Prejudices* series, was attacked at the time—and has been since—as malicious and unfair. As with even Mencken's most vituperative rhetoric, however, his strictures on Southern letters contained a measure of truth that some Southerners recognized. Indeed, the opening lines of the piece were borrowed by the author from a second-rate regional bard, J. Gordon Coogler, himself now totally forgotten: "Alas! for the South, her books have / grown fewer—/ She never was much given to literature." Historians have chastised Mencken for failing to observe that, even as he wrote, a Southern literary renaissance was in the making. *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*, by "Twelve Southerners," was published in 1930. But a quarter-century later another native son, Richard Weaver, was insisting that the South had collapsed in part because of its failure to "define its way of life"—a failure that had been implicitly acknowledged by several of the twelve, and explicitly noted by Allen Tate in his "Remarks on the Southern Religion."

The Southern Agrarians, looking about them for support in the struggle to defend and preserve pre-industrial civilization in the United States, identified the Western Agrarian movement as their most likely potential ally. Sixty-five years later, when both the South and the West have largely succumbed to industrialism as a way of life, their relationship to the rest of the country remains analogous. Because industrialization based on the extraction and utilization of natural resources implies a culture different from one dependent on the processing and transformation of those resources, the West is determined to reject direction from the postindustrial East; while in the South, another Southern renaissance—this time of a social and political, rather



than a literary, nature—puts the region increasingly at defiance with the North. Although the homogenization of the South by Yankee influence and Yankee immigration gives its reassertiveness a minority aspect that the rebelliousness of the West seems to lack, as between the two the odds may favor the Southern cause over the Western one for the simple reason that Southerners since the 1930's have gone some way to define their way of life, while Westerners have done very little in defining theirs.

The West needs its own equivalent of *I'll Take My Stand*—less the book itself than the organized consciousness that such a volume represents. Like the South, the West has a culture, a unique way of life; unlike it, it lacks a Culture, a distinctive mode of formal thought and way of seeing. The obvious explanation is that the West represents a Late Pioneer phase of civilization, preoccupied with subduing nature and procuring basic human and cultural needs. But to stop here is, perhaps, to let the West off too lightly. Western culture is more than practical, it is Philistine, with anti-intellectual tendencies: the expression of a blue-collar society where white-collar people share blue-collar tastes and ideas. In the West, the bozart are predominantly the contribution of transplants to the region, and it cannot be said that what *they* contribute amounts to very much.

Left-liberal and radical individuals in the Intermountain West are likely to be most comfortable in social and environmentalist work, in education, journalism, and the funded arts programs. In fact, there is little place else for them to go, little other to do. Culturally and politically, Western educators, journalists,

and artists are largely indistinguishable from their counterparts in the East and on the West Coast from whom they receive their tastes and habits of thought, as the intellectual establishment of New England in the 19th century imported its notions of thought and culture from the parent country. Most Western newspapers and television news programs support range and mining reform, sympathize with environmentalist causes in the region, oppose the Sagebrush Rebellion, defend federal ownership and control of the public lands, regard Tenth Amendment advocates as slightly cracked and potentially dangerous people, and promote federal policy furthering the consolidation of Washington's social, economic, and political control over the 50 states. They are also strongly protective of the state arts councils, and of the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities which underwrite these. In Wyoming, the *Casper Star-Tribune* regularly pounds the drum for the Wyoming Arts Council, which receives a significant portion of its income from Washington and regards itself as a sort of artistic Prometheus, bringer of the divine flame to a region that previously never had a thought of striking flint for itself. Unfortunately, the council with its monthly newsletter, mailed to every householder in the state, is an embarrassment and even a minor scandal, chiefly on account of its naive critical assumption that creativity is a wholly undifferentiated quality, pushpin being indeed as good as poetry provided that the pins themselves are handmade. More seriously, Western poets, story-writers, and novelists have taken contemporary Eastern "artists" for their models. Terry Tempest Williams, a Utah native and a Mormon in (apparently) good standing with her church, is hardly more a Western writer than her friend Bill McKibben of New York State, although the setting of her books remains the West; temperamentally and ideologically, she has become an Easterner. In the last generation or so the best—as well as the best-known—Western writers, from Edward Abbey to Thomas McGuane, have been native Easterners as well. In this respect, Western literature has actually lost ground in the past half-century, as

born Westerners like Eugene Manlove Rhodes, Harvey Fergusson, A.B. Guthrie, Jr., and Wallace Stegner have been succeeded by a generation of literary carpetbaggers that includes McGuane, Rick Bass, Gretel Ehrlich, Richard Ford, and Richard Brautigan.

Much more significant in the immediate crisis is the West's failure to develop a body of political and constitutional literature to support it in its confrontation with an aggrandizing federal government backed by invading social, cultural, and economic forces from the East. Regionalist patriots and defenders of the Old West act as if they believed that a simple appeal to the Tenth Amendment, reinforced by libertarian arguments regarding freedom of economic activity and the exploitation of natural resources, should be sufficient to convince Washington, the country at large, and the West's own dissenters and quilters of the justness and constitutionality of their cause. It is as if the leaders of the Southern states in the protracted crisis leading to the Civil War should have restricted their case to a narrow defense of states' rights, and the right of individuals to exploit any form of labor they found to hand.

In addition to its Calhoun, the West needs its Jefferson, its Hinton Rowan Helper, its George Fitzhugh. It will not be an easy thing to acquire them. Though no less a unique cultural entity than the Old South, the contemporary West cannot match Dixie as a developed civilization, or as an intellectual force in the national life of its time. More than a century after the closing of the frontier, it has yet to develop an intellectual tradition, to produce major artists and thinkers, great statesmen, and universities of distinction. The Mojave of the Bozart is the Mojave of rhetoric and the political intellect as well. But if it remains a Mojave much longer, it is certain to forfeit its historical identity to the assault of postmodernist influences which will not abate until the entire Intermountain region is reduced to the level of postindustrial uniformity and abstraction that has prevailed elsewhere in the nation—including, alas, in the South.

The West's principal enemy is not the federal government as such but environmentalism, whose role in relation to the region and its future is analogous to that played by abolitionism in the destruction of the Old South. In a sense undreamed of by Thoreau, environmentalism repre-

sents the ultimate Free Soil movement—Free Soilism taken to its literalist extreme. As the abolitionists considered the demolition of Southern civilization to be a justifiable program if it resulted in the emancipation of the Southern slaves, and as the Northern-dominated government used abolitionism as a means of acquiring economic and political dominion over the South, so the environmentalists anticipate the destruction of the culture of the Old West in the name of freedom for trees, rocks, wolves, and grizzly bears, and the federal government is eager to avail itself of their efforts for the purpose of effecting the political subduement of the Western states. This is why the West, if it is to make headway against its enemies, must accomplish two things. First, it needs to deploy effectively a moral and scientific critique of the environmentalist movement. Second, it will have to develop or adapt a political philosophy embracing devolution, regional and local control, and the value of intact regional communities.

These will not be easy tasks, partly because the kind of intellectual labor required is not congenial to Western people, and partly because such few Western intellectuals as exist are mostly not Westerners at all but carpetbaggers drawn to the region by the lure of wilderness and the environmental ideal, not the attraction of Western culture and traditional Western life. Nevertheless, a start has already been made by the most responsible of the various county movements which, abjuring land grabs, bombings, and personal threats to federal officials, prefers to concentrate on the fundamental issue at stake: the extent to which federally mandated environmental regulations attenuate and destroy local custom and culture. The innovators are the commissioners for Catron County, New Mexico, and their legal counsel, Jim Catron. When the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service asserted that the Endangered Species Act overrides the National Environmental Policy Act requiring them to share power with affected local communities, Catron County sued FWS in the Federal District Court of New Mexico, and won. And when Josephine, Coos, and Douglas counties in Oregon, influenced by ideas propagated by the National Federal Lands Conference in Salt Lake City, also sued the Service in the Federal District Court of Oregon over its interpretation of NEPA, Jim Catron advised them on how to ar-

gue. Although this judge too bought Catron's argument, the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco reversed on appeal. Meanwhile, FWS has appealed the District Court of New Mexico's ruling to the Tenth District Court in Denver, whose decision Catron County awaits. If the county wins, that would mean a split in the circuits, and the case would almost certainly then go before the Supreme Court. And if the high court were to find for Catron County, the outcome would be a new way by which FWS does business with state and county government—a possibility that environmentalists contemplate with fear and loathing.

Their counterstrategy is to argue that "culture" as the term is employed in the National Environmental Policy Act refers to ruins and other archaeological sites, not to anything that European-Americans have created in the American West in the past couple of hundred years. "They're bawling in Catron County about their 'custom and culture,'" says Susan "Toxic" Schock, an activist from Tucson who, since her move to Silver City, New Mexico, has become the nemesis of the county movement in general and Catron County in particular. "They've been around four generations at most. That's not very long in the scheme of things." Schock wants county residents to accept with good grace an end to ranching and timbercutting and embrace industrial tourism for their livelihood. Jim Catron, in his syndicated column "Mucho Ojo!" appearing weekly in newspapers around the West, has recently countered the "no-culture" argument by claiming that the Old West represents the contemporary extension of the ancient Celtic culture which, having swept across Europe from East to West over the past three or four millennia, crossed the Atlantic Ocean with the great North European migrations and continued its progress westward with the frontier. Mocking the pretensions of some environmentalists to be the New Druids, or Archdruids, Catron reminds his readers that the Celts were the first European miners, produced innovations in silviculture, and pioneered in sheep and cattle ranching, particularly in Scotland and Spain.

"How many cowboys," Jim demanded, stabbing his finger against a photograph of an ancient piece of statuary known as "The Dying Gaul," "have you seen with faces like that?" Quite a few, I agreed.

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Introduction by Dr. Donald W. Livingston
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"William Gilmore Simms (1806-1870) did not write *The Golden Christmas* to create a Southern mythology. In his day the abundance of the South was well known and widely envied. According to the U.S. Census, the per capita wealth of Southerners as late as 1860 was twice that of Northerners. Over three hundred Southern counties were better off than the wealthiest county in the North. In the same census the most affluent states, listed in order, were Mississippi, South Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, and Georgia. As Simms says in *The Golden Christmas*, 'There is little or no poverty in the South.'"

—Dr. David Aiken, Charleston Southern University